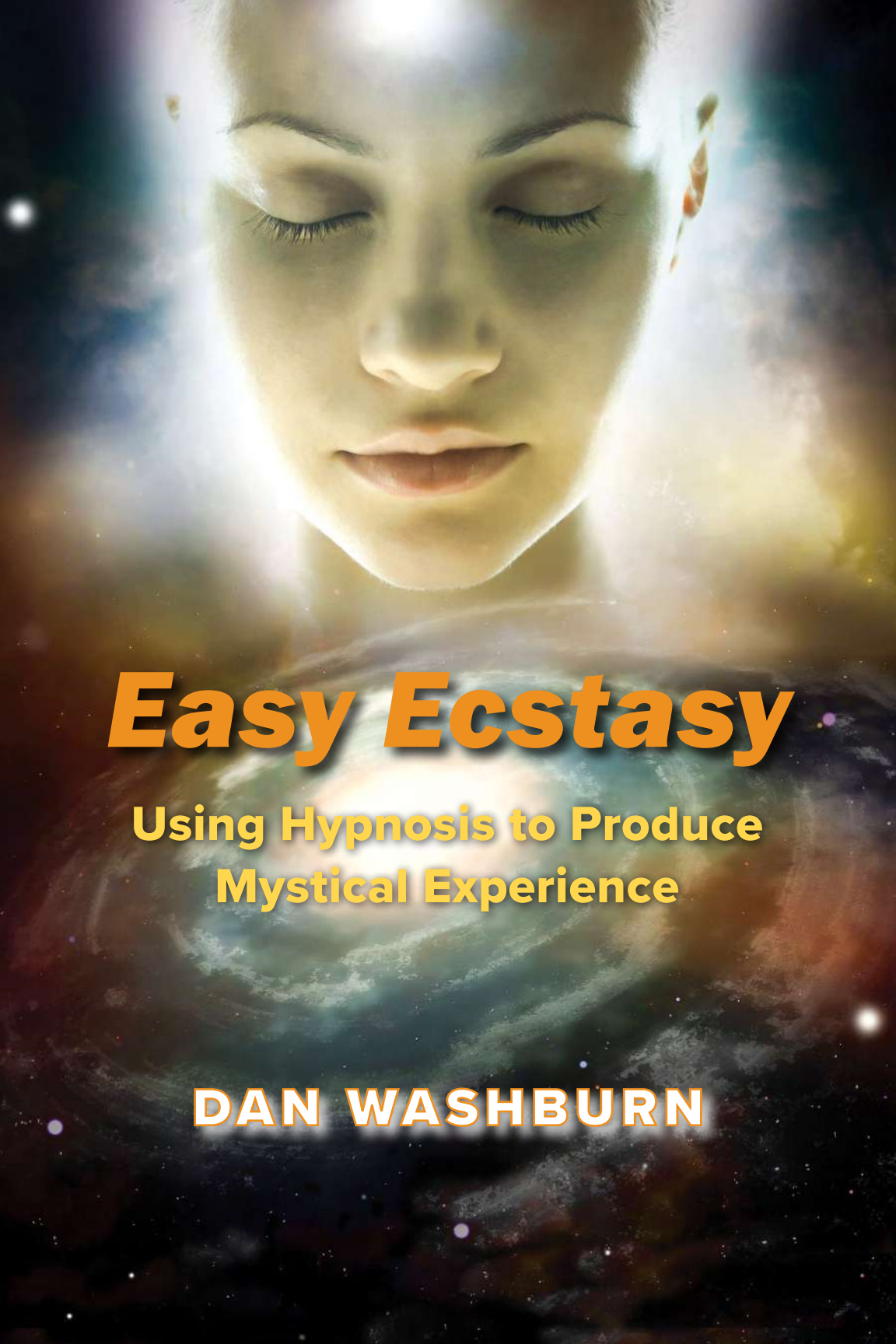
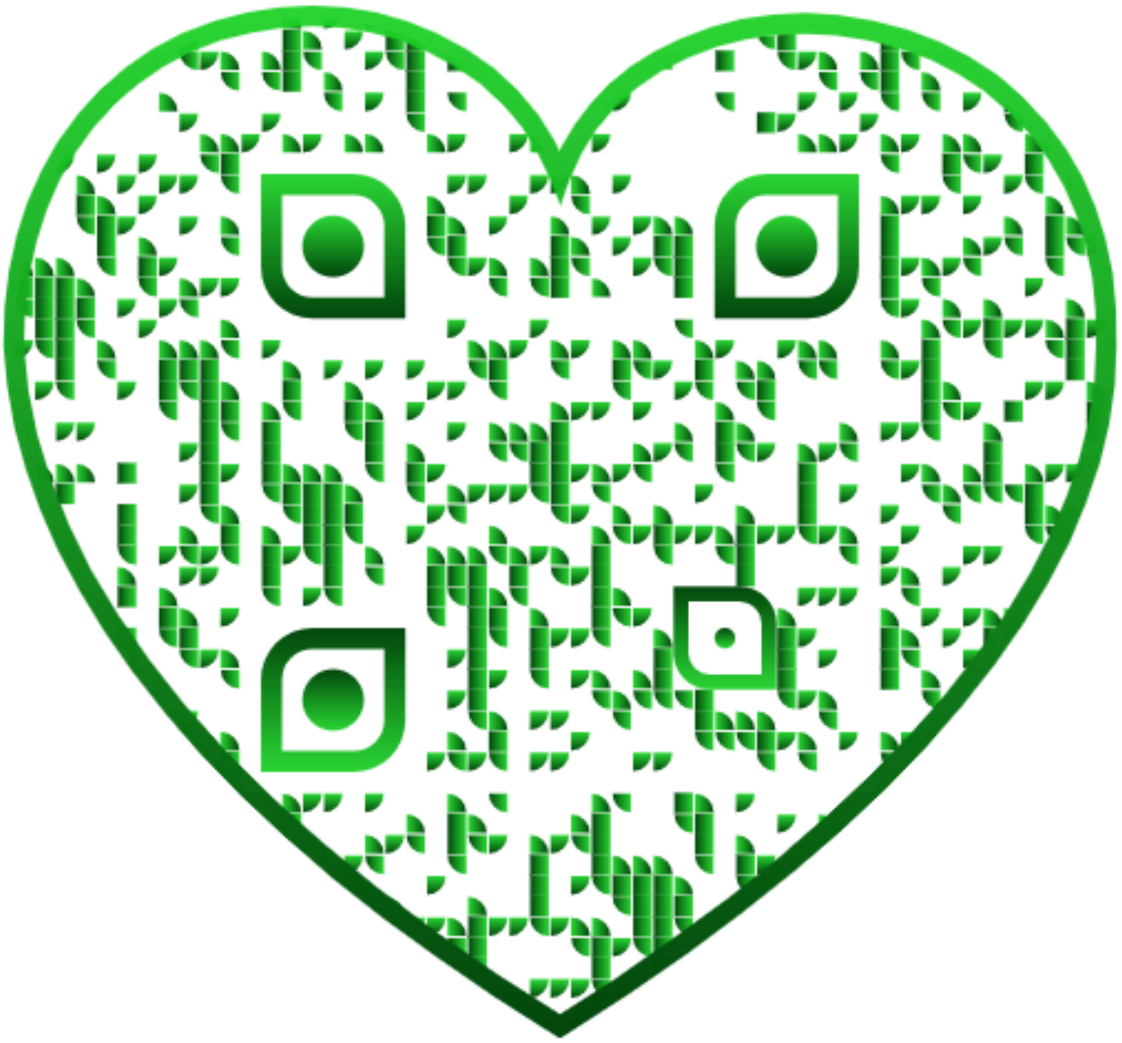

Easy Ecstasy
Using Hypnosis to Produce Mystical Experience
DAN WASHBURN



Easy Ecstasy

Using Hypnosis to Produce Mystical Experience

DAN WASHBURN

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Introduction

Little-known scientific research on self-hypnosis and hypnosis can help you create your own mystical experiences. A path to cosmic consciousness, enlightenment, and bliss opens up as you learn to develop spiritual trances. Even if you have only a little trance capacity, the article "Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss" will teach you a very easy method to have an experience of the mind suspended without words in ecstatic love. The book includes reprints of clinical and laboratory studies done at major universities. Part 1 reviews six psychological research studies that prove the startling fact that as you go deeper and deeper into hypnosis you have experiences similar to what are known as samadhi, satori, cosmic consciousness, enlightenment, or mystical bliss. Most of these studies are reprinted at the end of the book. From these studies a model of trance depth is constructed that shows different spiritual experiences as you go deeper and deeper into trance. Part 2 reviews fourteen methods from the psychological literature that use hypnotic trance to produce mystical experiences. These include Mystical Therapy, Ultra-Height, Mind-Games, Simulations of Near-Death and Out-of-Body Experiences, Trance Dance, Image Work, Core Transformation, and more. Part 3 has articles on the use of trance to produce spiritual experience in Jewish, Buddhist, and Christian mysticism. The article "Jesus the Mystic" gives evidence that Jesus himself was a master of trance ascension to the heaven world to see and unite with the light of the divine glory. Part 4 reprints most of the basic research studies that were reviewed in part 1. It also includes a superb article by Milton

Erickson, MD, the twentieth century's greatest researcher on hypnosis, called "Deep Hypnosis and Its Induction." Throughout this book we are relying on little-known psychological research from the clinic and the laboratory on how to reach mystical states.

Working with *Easy Ecstasy* — This book is an overview of the scientific work on the relation between trance and mystical experience. If you want to get started immediately experimenting with spiritual trance work to reach bliss states, I suggest you read my two articles "Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss" and "Tapping Meditation and the Ladder of Love." "Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss" will teach you a very easy method to have an experience of the mind suspended without words in ecstatic love. "Tapping Meditation" is a trance method I invented to induce spiritual epiphanies. Of course, there are many other methods outlined in Part Two of this book, but my two articles provide quick access to spiritual states. My overview of the scientific basis for spiritual trance work in Part One can be read straight through. You need to skim the articles in Parts Two, Three and Four and pick the one's you would like to read in detail. For personal experiences with the techniques, questions, and comments write to oceanoflovepress@gmail.com.

Why this book was written – The purpose of this book is to bring together in one place writings on how hypnosis and trance can be used to create spiritual experience. Not writings on hypnotic theory, not writings on hypnotic therapy, but writings on the methods that can be used to facilitate actual experience of the numinous *mysterium tremendum*. Are there such methods? Both hypnosis and spiritual experience are opaque areas in popular understanding. But the answer to this question is yes, a great deal of very interesting scientific work has been done. I am reprinting here articles from the psychological literature relevant to trance and its ability to create spiritual experience. I have also written a number of articles myself. This book is divided into four sections:

Part 1 – The Scientific Basis for Spiritual Trance Work

Trance: A Shortcut to Spiritual Experience

I review the six psychological studies that show that as you go into very deep hypnosis more and more phenomena similar to mystical and spiritual experience are encountered.

A Phenomenological Map of Trance Depth

I construct a map of trance depth using data from the six studies. The map shows what it feels like as one goes deeper and deeper into trance.

Hypnotic Simulation of Near-Death Experiences

Two thirds of near-death experiences are rated as mystical experiences. Near-death experiences can also be simulated using hypnosis. I try to show how near-death experiences are really trance experiences, so that it makes sense that they can be simulated by using hypnosis. Near-death experiences may be an evolutionary locus for the creation of the capacity for trance and mystical experience in human beings, since those people who have the capacity for NDE trance survive a death crisis better than those who don't.

Waking-Reality Illusions (WRIs)

Out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences are subjectively felt as waking realities. I explore the nature of waking reality illusions and point out that similar illusions can be encountered in very deep hypnosis.

Measures of Hypnotic Susceptibility and Spiritual Experience

I review a number of psychological studies that show that measures of trance capacity correlate with measures of spiritual experience.

Part 2 – Trance Methods for Producing Spiritual Experience

The articles in this section show how trance can be used to create spiritual experience. Some of my own articles are included and I reprint some articles from the psychological literature.

- Don Gibbons – Mystical Therapy
- The Ultra-Height Technique
- Ronald Havens – My Pursuit of Cosmic Consciousness
- Summary of *Mind Games* by Robert Masters and Jean Houston
- Kerry Goldstein – Using Hypnosis to Encourage Mystical Experience
- Paul Sacerdote – Applications of Hypnotically Elicited Mystical States to the Treatment of Physical and Emotional Pain
- Renaud Van Quekelberghe, et al. – Simulation of Near-Death and Out-Of-Body Experiences Under Hypnosis
- Trance Dance
- Helen Bonny's Guided Imagery and Music
- Image Streaming
- Connirae Andreas' Core Transformation
- Tapping Meditation and the Ladder of Love
- Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss
- A Collection of Other Methods

Part 3 – The Religious Use of Trance

- Jesus the Mystic
- Dan Merkur on Hypnotic Theories of Mysticism
- Evelyn Underhill on Ecstasy and Rapture in Christian Mysticism

- Daniel Goleman on the Path of Concentration in Buddhist Meditation
- Trance and Hasidic Prayer

Part 4 – The Basic Studies on Trance and Spiritual Experience

Part 4 reprints four of the six psychological studies that show that as you go into very deep hypnosis more and more phenomena like mystical and spiritual experience are encountered. The remaining two studies are easily accessible on the internet, so they are not included here. These are Milton Erickson's article, "A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley into the Nature and Character of Various States of Consciousness," and Etzel Cardeña's article, "The Phenomenology of Deep Hypnosis: Quiescent and Physically Active." I have also included an article by Milton Erickson called "Deep Hypnosis and Its Induction" in this section.

- Charles Tart: Transpersonal Potentialities of Deep Hypnosis
- Ernest Hilgard: Deep Hypnosis and Its Characteristics
- Spencer Sherman: Brief Report – Very Deep Hypnosis
- Spencer Sherman's Dissertation: Very Deep Hypnosis – An Experiential and Electroencephalographic Investigation
- Brian Feldman's Dissertation: A Phenomenological and Clinical Inquiry into Deep Hypnosis
- Milton Erickson: Deep Hypnosis and Its Induction

Uses – Once we have hypnotic methods for creating spiritual experience in hand, they can be used in several different ways:

Scientific research – The methods can be used in research projects to advance our understanding of hypnosis, mysticism, and the interconnections between the two. Being able to induce a spiritual experience at will allows us to bring it into the laboratory and run tests to tease out the essential neurological, psychological, social, and transpersonal parts of what is happening.

Spiritual development – Normal waking consciousness is designed to facilitate everyday tasks that impact such items as household chores, having fun with family, and working for a living. Trance methods for inducing spiritual states can be used to go beyond the everyday to realize and integrate those elusive qualities that we are all searching for, such as peace, love, joy, beauty, awe, wonder, reverence, and mystery.

Psychotherapy – For those with anxiety, depression, and trauma the induction of states of sacred peace, joy, and love can make a huge difference in their lives, restoring hope and giving access to a sense of meaning.

Historical insight – A deeper understanding of trance in relation to transcendence can throw a light on the history of religion and the evolution of culture. Until modern times religion was the matrix within which cultures grew and changed. Can we see evidence of the methods at work historically and across cultures?

Social progress – What if you could go to church and have a true mystical experience there? What would the world be like if everyone were a mystic, if everyone loved God with their whole soul and loved their neighbor just as much? What would it be like if everyone were filled with inner bliss and radiant loving-kindness? A world

is coming in which every man and woman will be a mystic. A new wave of research on psychedelic drugs is opening the way to reliable methods for producing mystical states during psychedelic sessions. The research detailed in this book is also opening the way to methods for producing mystical states, methods using hypnosis and trance. Given the restrictions on psychoactive drugs and the many current world social crises, the entirely legal methods for inducing mystical ecstasy outlined in this book should be explored and applied as soon as possible. In the future the two methods might be combined by using low-dose psychedelics in conjunction with trance methods to reliably produce spiritual experience. This may be a route to the otherwise hidden experience of numinous reality for those who have very little trance capacity.

Understanding the nature of reality – Are spiritual experiences purely a product of agitated brain chemistry or do they actually indicate a communion with a transcendent existence? It is my belief that materialist science maintains its grip on the definition of reality at the cost of ignoring vast tracts of parapsychological research, innumerable field reports of psychic events, and the lives of the saints. Why do we have the biological capacity for spiritual experience? Why did it evolve in the human organism? The answer is that we developed this capacity because non-sensory information transfer occurs at a higher rate in these states. In the younger days of the human race if you needed to know where game could be found, whether it was dangerous to make a particular journey, what plant to use to cure an illness, or when the enemy would attack, you consulted the shaman. Using trance, he entered an altered state of consciousness and brought back answers to your questions. These answers were often true, and you and your group lived. Those groups that did not consult the shaman, or had a second-rate shaman, often died out. This led to the biological evolution of the human ability to have spiritual experience in altered states with its associated access to non-sensory information transfer.

God is my lab partner – If spiritual experience is communion with a transcendent existence, the problem then becomes, what is the nature of that transcendent existence? All the old questions about God, angels, demons, and the unquiet dead come rushing back to haunt us, the questions we had hoped science had buried deep in the cemetery of superstition. Still and all, we cannot wear blinders like the current workhorses pulling the wagon of science – it is a betrayal of science itself not to look at the evidence. Despite our fear of things lurking in the dark shadows beyond the campfire, we have to continue to search for the illuminating truth that will make sense of not just the easily accepted parts of reality, but all of it. It is some consolation to know that we are collaborating with the Sacred Source, the Mysterious Depth itself, when we pursue a scientific search for the ability to create mystical states.

A first-class scientific adventure – I think you are in for an unbelievably exciting journey of discovery as you read the papers collected in this book. I certainly spent many hours in intense intellectual delight as I searched and sifted, continually seeing distant vistas opening up before my eyes as I read a newly found treasure.

My recommendation – Prayer, meditation, and psychoactive drugs are three popular ways that people are using to connect themselves with what they perceive as a spiritual reality. Spiritual trance methodologies can make the same kind of connection. Their advantage is that they do it very rapidly. It is my hope that you will reach out to experiment with spiritual trance and discover its mystical delights. As someone who has experimented along these lines, I recommend it highly.

Dan Washburn – I'm a graduate of Harvard University and have an MA in psychology from Brandeis University. At Brandeis I was a teaching assistant to the famous psychologist Abraham Maslow.

After getting my MA degree I completed a two-year internship in group psychotherapy and psychodrama at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, DC. I did not go on in psychology, however. I went forward with data analysis, statistics, and computers. I worked my way up to be a manager of satellite traffic at COMSAT, the Communications Satellite Corporation. From there I worked for eighteen years as a senior systems analyst at the FBI. I retired in 2013 and have been pursuing my interests in the intersection of psychology and spirituality.

My best friend and I did experiments with hypnosis while we were in high school, which gave me a great respect for the power of hypnosis to alter consciousness. At Harvard I studied psychology. I had a course there on the "Psychology of Motivation" under Richard Alpert, who later became the spiritual teacher Ram Dass after his time in India. At Brandeis I developed interests in humanistic and transpersonal psychology under Abe Maslow. A severe illness in my early thirties caused me to reexamine the New Testament, searching for its true meaning. Since then, I have spent a great deal of my time studying research on the historical Jesus, trying to understand who he was and the content of his message. I have also searched for meaning in Taoism, Sufism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Along the way I have had a number of spiritual experiences. Around 2014 and 2015 I developed a self-hypnotic method for voluntarily generating spiritual epiphanies. You can read about it in the article of mine in this book called "Tapping Meditation and the Ladder of Love." I am working on two other books, one about my understanding of Western religion called *Christianity is the Cultivation of Love* and one about my historical Jesus research called *Jesus and Esoteric Judaism*. Most recently, I have developed an incredibly powerful technique called "Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss." You can read my initial write-up on it in this book.

– Dan Washburn, 2022

PART ONE

The Scientific Basis for Spiritual Trance Work

Chapter 1
Trance: A Shortcut to Spiritual Experience

This book is about a shortcut to spiritual experience that has been opening up through scientific work on deep trance. Starting in 1965 there have been six studies by psychologists that show that when people who are excellent hypnotic subjects go into very deep trance, trance that is much deeper than ordinary hypnosis, they have experiences similar to, if not necessarily as intense as, those reported by mystics and saints. These studies are summarized later in this article and most of them are reprinted at the end of this book. One of the startling things about the studies is that it only takes about an hour or two of trance work for spiritual states to develop. It doesn't take years of meditation and prayer. Other trance research reported in this book indicates that it is perfectly possible for ordinary people to have trance experiences of transcendence. It seems likely to me that the knowledge we are gaining about the trance process from the six studies and from other research on the hypnotic approach to spirituality will open the way to what I call "easy ecstasy" for everyone.

Purpose of this chapter

In this chapter we are going to review the six scientific research studies that show that people who go far enough into deep trance reach states similar to those reported by mystics and saints. The six studies are:

Milton Erickson's case study of Aldous Huxley (1965)
Charles Tart's case study of a person with profound trance capabilities (1970)
Ernest Hilgard's exploratory study of several subjects with moderately high trance capabilities (1977)
Spencer Sherman's study of ten excellent hypnotic subjects (1971)
Brian Feldman's study of another ten excellent hypnotic subjects (1976)
Etzel Cardeña's study of twelve hypnotic virtuosi (2005)

Note that the first two articles are case studies, the next is an exploratory study, and the last three are full-scale psychological research experiments.

In the next chapter, using the six studies, we are going to build a map of what a person experiences at each level of hypnotic depth. This is a map of what happens as one goes deeper and deeper into trance when the operator does not give any suggestions about what to experience. The operator simply keeps quiet and only asks once in a while: What are you experiencing? Here are some of the things that can be experienced as one goes deeper and deeper into trance:

Feelings of being heavy, of being warm, spinning, floating, sinking
Changes to the body image – body is big, small, parts disappear, parts grow or shrink, bending, melting, body spreads out and flattens
Great brightness
Feelings of joy and wonder
Thinking in images rather than words
Time slows and stops
Sensations of energy moving in the body
Great darkness

Sensation of the self floating in an infinite expanse
Peace, calm, equanimity
Mind leaving the body and spreading out
Loss of touch with the environment
Loss of touch with the body
Increased meaningfulness
Feelings of awe and wonder, joy and happiness
A feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable
Being in touch with one's inner self
Merging with pure light or energy and finding one's innermost core
Sense of infinite potentiality
Loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego"
Voidness, absolute mental quiet: no thoughts or images
Oneness, being everything, feeling oneness with everything

As you can see, there are many wonderful things that people can experience during a journey into profound trance. With the map of the pure phenomenology of trance in hand we can look later in the book at various trance methods and religious methods for producing spiritual experience and begin to understand more about what is actually going on.

The difficulty in achieving spiritual experience

When people want to live a spiritual life, they are not just looking for a theological understanding of the world or a moral code to guide their actions. They are looking for spiritual experience of the numinous reality behind everyday life. These experiences are not easy to come by. They can take years of meditation and prayer to develop. When they do develop, they can take more years to transform the personality so that one can live a truly saintly life. Such a life is not necessarily a peaceful one. A life transformed by inspiration and

ecstasy may be fiercely opposed to the rules set by the current civic and religious authorities. In modern times we also have to deal with the question of validity. Are these experiences simply psychological realities of the human brain or are they the result of interactions with actual spiritual realities that exist beyond the human body? If we believe in both psychological and spiritual realities, we have to decide which of these realities is at play in any given experience. A life informed by experience of the transcendent is difficult to come by and, with modern institutions and understandings, it is difficult to bring to fruition. This is hugely unfortunate, since our sense of meaning and our feeling for the ultimate value of life are anchored in our actual experience of the sacred, not in the outer rituals and teachings of any religion. Any parrot can say, "I believe in God." It takes a person who has experienced something of the reality of the holy mystery behind that phrase to begin to live a radiant life.

An example of trance-induced spiritual experience

Here is a trance-induced mystical experience in a young cancer patient reported by Dr. Ronald Havens. Note how easily a spiritual state develops during this hypnosis session.

> Several years after her graduation … Helen … called me and asked for my help with her intense pain. She had cancer, untreatable terminal cancer. During our first session I guided her into a trance and told her simply that her unconscious mind could now use the openness of her trance state to provide those things she needed. Within a few minutes she stiffened a bit, then smiled broadly and just sat there smiling for over 30 minutes.
>
> Afterwards she explained that she had just been sitting there in a kind of blank waiting state when she began to feel surrounded by a warm light that became brighter and

brighter and eventually became such an intensely brilliant light that the energy of it seemed to penetrate every cell in her body, at which point she could no longer tell where the light began and where she ended. She felt herself merge with the warm energy of that light, and then she "knew" that the light was everything around her, a vast unity of loving energy that is everything and everyone. She said that this "understanding" was followed by a feeling of overwhelming peace and by a realization that at that moment she was feeling no pain at all.

Helen was quite excited as she told me all of this afterwards and even cried a bit, apparently tears of happiness or joy. She said she was no longer afraid of death, and no longer afraid of her pain. I was later told that she continued to use trance on her own until her death a few months later. (Havens, Ronald. *Self-Hypnosis for Cosmic Consciousness: Achieving Altered States, Mystical Experiences and Spiritual Enlightenment*. Bethel, CT: Crown House Publishing Company LLC, 2007)

The other shortcut to spiritual experience

The other shortcut to spiritual experience aside from deep trance is, of course, the use of psychedelic drugs. Much of the psychological research that has been done on mystical states has used psychoactive drugs to initiate experience of the transcendent. This research can provide a model for work on deep trance in its relation to spirituality, so we are going to need to say a few words about it.

California psychologist Wilson Van Dusen reports that during a psychedelic session he was in a black void in which "God was walking on me and I cried for joy. My own voice seemed to speak of his coming, but I didn't believe it. Suddenly and unexpectedly

the zenith of the void was lit up with the blinding presence of the One. How did I know it? All I can say is that there was no possibility of doubt." ("Instant Mysticism," *Time* magazine, October 25, 1963) Paul McCartney has said in an interview that LSD "opened my eyes to the fact that there is a God ... It is obvious that God isn't in a pill, but it explained the mystery of life. It was truly a religious experience." George Harrison said of his first LSD trip, "I had such an overwhelming feeling of well-being, that there was a God, and I could see him in every blade of grass. It was like gaining hundreds of years of experience in 12 hours." ("How LSD Opened the Door to 'Revolver,'" *Rolling Stone*, August 25, 2016) Timothy Leary, who before he became a psychedelic guru was a well-respected professor of psychology at Harvard University, said that he gave LSD or psilocybin to sixty-nine full-time religious professionals. Three out of four had "intense mystico-religious reactions, and more than half claimed that they had the deepest spiritual experience of their life." ("Instant Mysticism," *Time*, October 25, 1963) Dr. Walter Pahnke, a psychiatrist and a minister, became interested in the mystical potential of psychedelic drugs. In 1962 he performed a famous double-blind experiment. Twenty divinity students received a pill just before the Good Friday service at the Boston University chapel. Half took a placebo and half took psilocybin, a powerful psychedelic drug. The service included organ music, solos, readings, prayers, and personal meditation. It was piped from the main chapel to the dimly lit chapel in the basement where the experiment took place. Eight out of the ten divinity students who took the psilocybin reported a mystical experience. Only one of the students who took the placebo said that anything spiritual took place. He had a feeling of "sacredness" and a "sense of peace." Questionnaires, descriptions, interviews, and group discussions of the experiences were content-analyzed, rated, and measured against a template of characteristics derived from descriptions of mystical experience found in world religious literature. Pahnke concluded that the psychedelic experiences were

"indistinguishable from, if not identical with," the classic mystical experiences reported in the literature. (Michael Pollan, "The Trip Treatment," *The New Yorker*, February 9, 2015)

There are a number of problems with the use of psychedelics, however. They are illegal. They can precipitate psychotic episodes. Intense anxiety attacks can develop. Recreational use doesn't necessarily lead to spiritual experience; you need spiritual expectations and spiritual surroundings and a correct dose size to get the results you want. Overuse can sometimes result in a withdrawal from reality and a tendency to flashbacks to the psychedelic state.

Between 1953 and 1973 there were 116 studies of LSD, examining its therapeutic potential with alcoholism, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenics, convicts, and many others. The results were often very good. However, in 1970, when President Nixon signed the Controlled Substances Act, psychedelics became Schedule 1 drugs. This made them entirely illegal. It became almost impossible to do any research with them. The promising field of psychedelic therapeutics died out and was mostly forgotten, since there was no use in even reading the literature, given that you couldn't do anything with it. After thirty-five years of this, things began to change in 2006 when Dr. Roland Griffiths, a professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, published a ground-breaking double-blind study entitled, "Psilocybin can occasion mystical-type experiences having substantial and sustained personal meaning and spiritual significance." (R. R. Griffiths, W. A. Richards, U. McCann, R. Jesse, *Psychopharmacology* 187: 268–83) The fact that psychedelic research could be safely done at the most prestigious medical facility in the country by one of the most respected psychopharmacologists in the world opened up a new attitude to the study of hallucinogenic drugs.

Regulatory agencies began to reconsider their refusal to allow experimentation, which initiated a second wave of research on the therapeutic and religious use of psychedelics.

I predict that in the future – hopefully the near future – we will have medically supervised religious retreats where a person seeking to advance in the spiritual way can go to safely experience psychedelic-induced mystical states. In the meantime, the deep trance shortcut may be the quickest and safest way to spiritual experience.

Measures of mystical experience

Griffiths' study used two questionnaires that were designed to measure mystical experience. The Pahnke-Richards mystical experience questionnaire (MEQ) is a version of the test that Pahnke used to measure mystical experience during the Good Friday experiment. Its forty-three items were embedded in a larger hundred-item questionnaire that contained irrelevant distracting questions. It provides scale scores for each of seven domains of mystical experience:

1. Internal Unity – pure awareness beyond sense impressions, a merging with ultimate reality
2. External Unity – unity of all things, all things are alive, all is one
3. Transcendence of Time and Space
4. Ineffability and Paradoxicality – the experience is impossible to describe in words
5. Sense of Sacredness – awe
6. Noetic Quality – feeling of intuitive knowledge of the truth about ultimate reality
7. Deeply Felt Positive Mood – joy, peace, love

An experience was called a complete mystical experience if the subject scored 60 percent or more of the maximum score for each of the scales, except for Internal and External Unity. With Internal and External Unity just one had to be above 60 percent.

The second questionnaire used to measure mystical experience was Ralph Hood's Mysticism Scale. ("The Construction and Preliminary Validation of a Measure of Reported Mystical Experience," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 14, no. 1 [1975]: 29) This is a thirty-two-item questionnaire frequently used in the field of the psychology of religion. It yields scores on eight conceptual categories:

1. Ego Loss – losing oneself into a greater unity
2. Unity – perception of the unity of all things
3. Inner Subjectivity – perception of an inner awareness in all things
4. Timelessness/Spacelessness – transcending spatiotemporal limits
5. Noetic Quality – feels the experience is a source of valid direct knowledge
6. Ineffability – words cannot express the experience
7. Positive Affect – joy, bliss
8. Sacredness – intrinsic holiness of the experience

Another example of trance-induced spiritual experience

Here is a spiritual experience produced by the psychologist Jean Houston using trance alone. Dr. Houston has both a PhD in psychology and a PhD in religion. She is recognized as one of the principal founders of the Human Potential Movement and has served as the president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology. American architect and visionary Buckminster Fuller said of her, "Jean Houston's mind should be considered a national treasure." In 1970 she

hypnotized *Time* magazine researcher Clare Mead, who had the following mystical experience:

> [It] was as vivid as if I were in a waking dream. … At Dr. Houston's suggestion, I began "flying." Not literally, of course, but never except in dreams have I felt so ecstatically the sensation of flight – free, joyous, yet peaceful, ever deeper to the center of my being, until I was conscious of an indescribable unity within myself and with all things. Finally, I felt as if I had flown to the core of life itself.
>
> Dr. Houston then told me that I would spend some time contemplating … and that I would understand, in a way that was deep and permanent, something of the problem of injustice. What followed was ineffable, except to say that I became more and more sorrowful at what I envisioned (indeed tears were streaming down my face); yet increasingly I could "see," in the most profound way that I have ever known that the beauty of life far exceeds the sorrow, the injustice.
>
> [Dr. Houston then initiated a "death" and "rebirth" cycle. Ms. Mead chose a star in the night sky to symbolize her life.] Gradually I was able to relinquish my hold as I watched it disappear, leaving only vast, empty blackness. … Then, still under Dr. Houston's direction, I made an enormous effort to revive my poor star. At first, I thought to myself that this would probably occur as the gradual brightening of a star in the blackness. But instead, and all of a sudden, I saw the sky suddenly flash into total, blinding white light. … I knew with incredible clarity that life is the victor in the struggle against death, not in the sense of an afterlife in a far-away heaven, but in the certainty that life is eternal, despite death. I was overcome with the joy of this truth,

> and I wanted to run out on the street and shout it to the New Yorkers plodding homeward in the gray smog from their dull downtown offices, unaware that a sea of beauty, life and love surrounded and sustained them. ("Mysticism in the Laboratory," *Time* magazine, October 5, 1970)

Features of a mystical experience found in this example:

> **Unity** — I was conscious of an indescribable unity within myself and with all things.
>
> **Ecstasy** — Never except in dreams have I felt so ecstatically the sensation of flight – free, joyous, yet peaceful … unaware that a sea of beauty, life and love surrounded and sustained them.
>
> **Ineffability** — What followed was ineffable.
>
> **Noetic Quality** — Increasingly I could "see," in the most profound way that I have ever known that the beauty of life far exceeds the sorrow, the injustice. Life is the victor in the struggle against death … I was overcome with the joy of this truth, and I wanted to run out on the street and shout it to the New Yorkers.

We are now going to review the six studies.

STUDY ONE:
Milton Erickson and Aldous Huxley

Our first study, "A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley into the Nature and Character of Various States of Consciousness," was published in 1965. It is the work of the psychiatrist Milton H. Erickson, the twentieth century's greatest investigator of hypnosis. *(Ameri-*

can Journal of Clinical Hypnosis 8 [1965]: 14–33) He collaborated briefly with the writer Aldous Huxley, the author of *Brave New World, Eyeless in Gaza*, and other literary works, to explore Huxley's trance capabilities. In order to write, Huxley already had the ability to go into a state of deep withdrawal from external reality, a state where he was completely absorbed in his creative writing. He could answer the telephone or receive a special delivery letter without having any memory of the event. When Erickson asked him to go into this state it took him about five minutes to withdraw into deep reflection. Afterward Huxley commented, noting that the experience was different because he had no literary work to do. "I found myself just waiting for something. I did not know what. It was just a 'something' that I seemed to feel would come in what seemed to be a timeless, spaceless void. I say, that's the first time I noted that feeling. Always I've had some thinking to do. But this time I seemed to have no work in hand." Repetitions of the withdrawal into deep reflection showed that there were three aspects to the experience: a timeless, spaceless void, a comfortable waiting for an undefined "something," and a need to return to ordinary consciousness. Huxley characterized whatever it is that is waited for as "an expected meaningless something for which one awaits in a state of Nirvana since there is nothing more to do." Mysticism is frequently divided into two types. In one type there is a withdrawal from the outside world into a unitive experience of a timeless, spaceless void of pure consciousness. In the other type of mysticism there is not a void of pure consciousness but a sense of unitary oneness with all things. In this session of deep reflection, Huxley is experiencing the timeless, spaceless void. Erickson then asked Huxley to go into deep reflection again and while he was there to sense color. Erickson writes, "His subjective report was simply, that he had 'lost' himself in a 'sea of color,' of 'sensing,' 'feeling,' 'being' color, of being 'quite utterly involved in it with no identity of your own, you know.'" Note how this experience of oneness with a sea of color is similar to Helen's mystical experience in which she merged with the warm energy of

an all-pervading light. This is the second type of mysticism, a sense of unitary oneness with all things.

When Erickson then hypnotized Huxley and suggested that he have a visual hallucination, his mind was flooded with an intense sense of pastel colors in wavelike motion. Later he related this experience to the sea of color he had dissolved into in deep reflection and also to past experiences of psychedelic colors. Next, he was hypnotized to explore his psychedelic experiences, but later said that the hypnosis did not give him the continuing subjective feeling of being in the psychedelic state, since there was intellectual content that paralleled the feeling content. During another two-hour session of deep hypnosis Huxley watched himself in distorted time as a child grow through a multitude of episodes from infant to twenty-three-year-old. Erickson says that this is not the only case of a life-review that he has encountered. He gives the details of one other case and mentions several others; he has not been able to experimentally induce such a life-review – it always occurs spontaneously. Note that a life-review is often part of a near-death experience and that near-death experiences are frequently also mystical experiences (see the chapter on Hypnotic Simulation of Near-Death Experience).

We have seen three aspects of mystical experience in Huxley's trance work: the timeless-spaceless void, loss of self in a sea of color, and a life-review. Hence it is not surprising that Huxley was interested in spiritual subjects. He belonged to the Vedanta Society of Southern California for twenty-four years until his death. Vedanta is the philosophy based on the mysticism found in Hindu scriptures called the Upanishads. It is also indebted to the syncretism of the Bhagavad Gita, another Hindu mystical scripture. Huxley lectured at branches of the Vedanta Society and contributed forty-eight articles to its magazine over the years. One of his most famous books was *The Doors of Perception*, an account of his experiences with

the psychedelic drug mescaline. He also wrote a book discussing the teachings of the mystics called *The Perennial Philosophy*. At the end of his life he published *Island*, a counterpoint to the enslaving society of his *Brave New World*. With *Island* he hoped to show how a utopian society could be organized to help human beings reach a unitive knowledge of the divine. Huxley was the first to suggest that psychoactive substances be used to ease the experience of death. Following his own advice, he had himself injected with LSD during his death from cancer in 1963.

Huxley had his own trance method of deep reflection that he used in his literary work. He was also an excellent hypnotic subject. Erickson was able to elicit various experiences that in retrospect can be seen as parts of, if not complete, mystical experiences.

STUDY TWO:
Transpersonal Potentialities of Deep Hypnosis

Our second article is Dr. Charles Tart's "Transpersonal Potentialities of Deep Hypnosis," published in 1970. Tart studied electrical engineering for three years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before switching fields to become a research psychologist. After his doctorate he did training in hypnosis research with Professor Ernest Hilgard at Stanford University. He has had an enormous impact on the field of psychology. His classic book *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969) helped initiate the study of altered states. He was a major contributor to the development of transpersonal psychology, the branch of psychology that studies the spiritual and transcendent aspects of human beings as realities that go beyond ordinary human material existence.

In this article Tart reports on his work with a single extremely talented hypnotic subject, a person who can go into states of profound hypnosis. In order to identify the depth of hypnosis at any given time Tart would

ask for a number on a self-report scale of depth. Zero to twenty-five represented ordinary hypnosis, twenty-five to fifty represented deep hypnosis, and fifty and above represented profound trance. "Some part of your mind knows where you are at, at every moment. Give me an intuitive answer." At times the subject would report depths of 120 and beyond. To compare this talented subject's experience with mystical experience I am going to map his results against the conceptual categories found on the Mystical Experiences Questionnaire (MEQ) and Hood's Mysticism Scale, giving first my description of what the subject reported and then a quote from Dr. Tart:

1. Transcendence of Time and Space —
   Time feels like it is gradually slowing down as the subject goes deeper into trance. However, beyond the level of fifty, profound trance, time becomes a meaningless concept. Tart: "He no longer feels like he is in the kind of space-time framework we talk about."
2. Internal Unity – pure awareness beyond sense impressions, a merging with ultimate reality
   At around fifty his sense of the environment reaches a low. There is no physical world. There is nothing going on. Around eighty or ninety spontaneous mental activity ceases. His mind is completely quiet. Tart: "He eventually becomes aware of an infinite amount of potential. Anything is possible."
3. Ego Loss – losing oneself into a greater unity
   Ordinary identity steadily decreases as he goes deeper into hypnosis. At the deeper levels Tart says, "He is not anybody in particular; he's potential. He could be this, he could be that."
4. External Unity – unity of all things, all is one
   Tart: "A feeling of oneness with the universe continues to go up. I don't know if it plateaus off at a very deep level or not."

5. Deeply Felt Positive Mood – joy, peace, love
   Bliss, joy, and love are not reported. The sense of peace, however, gets stronger and stronger until around level seventy it becomes meaningless. If "I" don't exist anymore, how can I be peaceful?
6. Inner Subjectivity – perception of an inner awareness in all things
   Not reported.
7. Ineffability and Paradoxicality – the experience is impossible to describe in words
   Not reported.
8. Sense of Sacredness – awe
   Not reported.
9. Noetic Quality – feeling of intuitive knowledge of the truth about ultimate reality
   Not reported.

Several of the features of a complete mystical experience are missing from this subject's explorations into profound hypnosis. The perception of Inner Subjectivity that all things are alive, that they have an inner awareness, is missing. Ineffability, Paradoxicality, Sacred awe, and the Noetic feeling that one has received a revelation of truth about ultimate reality are all absent. On the other hand, there is evidence for Transcendence of Time and Space, Internal Unity with a void of pure consciousness full of absolute potential, Ego Loss into an identity of pure potential, External Unity with the oneness of all things, and a Deeply Felt Positive Mood of peace.

Although peace is present here there is no suggestion of the overwhelming love and bliss found in a typical mystical experience. There is also an internal contradiction in the data. On the one hand there is a sense of unity with all things, on the other a unity with a void of absolute potential. External and internal unity should be mutually exclusive, since one cannot be absorbed in the All and the Void at the same

time. We don't know enough about the subject's experiences to begin to resolve this conflict.

This is the experience of just one subject, but it suggests that if we want to create complete mystical experiences with hypnosis, we need to find ways to bring love, bliss, and sacred awe into the process. Our problem may be similar to what happens with psychedelics. To produce a mystical experience rather than a recreational drug experience you need a religious expectation and a religious setting. Dr. Tart worked in a hypnosis laboratory in a way that minimized expectations. If we want to create a more complete mystical experience via hypnosis, we should do experiments in a religious setting and convey expectations of an encounter with love, bliss, and sacred awe.

STUDY THREE:
Hilgard's Exploratory Study

Our third piece of research is an exploratory study using pilot subjects. It is found in Ernest Hilgard's book *Divided Consciousness: Multiple Controls in Human Thought and Action*. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977, 167–71) Hilgard was a distinguished professor at Stanford University. He was the head of the psychology department there and later served as the dean of the graduate division. He is most well-known for his work on hypnosis; he was head of the Stanford Laboratory of Hypnosis Research. Charles Tart worked with one subject who was at the top of the charts in terms of trance capability. Hilgard studied the deep trance experiences of several subjects who were rated moderately high in their trance capability. Unfortunately, he doesn't tell us how many subjects he worked with. After hypnosis induction they were invited to experience deeper and deeper trance without repeated suggestions from the hypnotist. Depth of trance was determined by self-report scale. Hilgard writes, "When deep trance is involved, the best measures are numerical estimates made by the subject on his own scale. This is equivalent

to magnitude estimation as used in psychophysics and is very satisfactory."

Hilgard reports the following: "Observations frequently include a loss of any connection with the body, a failure of time to have any meaning, the pleasantness of the experience, and some reports characteristic of mystical experience – a sense of oneness, a feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable." With Hilgard's study we are beginning to see that experiences similar to mystical states are not just confined to hypnotic virtuosi. He is replicating these results with a number of subjects who are only moderately high in their hypnotic capabilities.

STUDY FOUR: Spencer Sherman's Investigation of Very Deep Hypnosis

The fourth study on deep trance and spiritual experience is Spencer Sherman's PhD dissertation, "Very Deep Hypnosis: An Experiential and Electroencephalographic Investigation," done in 1971. Dr. Sherman has a BS from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an MA and PhD from Stanford University. He went on to become a licensed clinical psychologist and is a professor of psychology at Santa Barbara City College.

Sherman did his study of very deep hypnosis in order to understand the experiences that occur as one goes deeper into trance. He also wanted to see whether subjects went through the same experiences or whether individuals differed in what happened during trance. He chose ten excellent subjects with much previous involvement with hypnosis. In individual sessions he told them to minimize expectations, to experience whatever they experienced, and to go to the deepest level that they could using self-hypnosis techniques. The experimenter did not make any suggestions. Every few minutes the

subject was asked, "Depth?" and, "What have you been experiencing?" Everything was recorded and, at the end of a session, the subject filled out a set of questionnaires. Each subject had three sessions, the third differing from the first two in that electroencephalographic recordings were made. Many of the experiences reported showed very strong inter-subject consistency. Statistical significance was beyond the .001 level. Sherman concludes, "The research presented indicates that: (1) it is possible for (at least some) hypnotic subjects to go deeper into hypnosis than has been previously explored; (2) the experiences reported in very deep hypnosis are consistent across subjects and follow a meaningful pattern – the deepest of them show a correspondence to what is usually labeled 'mystical' or 'unitive' experience."

The following are experiences reported by the ten subjects either on a questionnaire given after the sessions or from self-reports during the sessions. The experiences are organized by level of trance depth from the deepest to the lightest. The number of subjects reporting the experience on the questionnaire is also given. If "number of subjects" is blank it means that the experience was not on the questionnaire but was given during self-report in trance.

Being everything	**7**
Feeling oneness with everything	**9**
Blankness	**9**
Loss of knowledge of your individual identity	**8**
Absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.	**10**
Voidness	**10**
No "self" or "ego"	**7**
Nothing happening	**10**

Difficulty in talking	10
Totally real and (relatively) long-term hallucinations involving all sensory modalities, i.e., other realities	–
Feeling totally free	–
Complete loss of touch with external environment (room, etc.)	9
Feeling of motion	–
Feeling totally spread out	8
Mind fully separated and physically distant from body	–
Thoughts widely spaced	9
Subconscious thoughts and images	9
Process of dissolving or spreading out; mind leaving body and spreading	–
Warmth or cold	–
Feeling totally inside one's head	–
Loss of touch with body	10
Occasional isolated images	8
Great darkness	9
No sense of time	9
Feeling afraid	–
Feeling that arms are very large	–
Thinking in images rather than words	10
Feelings of joy	6
Separating of parts of the mind	7
Partial loss of touch with external environment	10
Feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head	8
Great brightness	8

Feeling of floating	**10**
Clairvoyance; telepathy; joining another mind; presence of another	**–**
Profound personal or philosophical insights	**4**
Feeling calm and quiet	**10**
Heaviness of body	**–**
Spontaneous auditory experiences	**7**
Flashes of light or color	**9**
Pictures and images	**9**
Wavelike phenomena	**7**
Feeling relaxed	**10**
Hypersensitivity of body	**7**
Emotional experiences	**8**
Simple images	**9**
Feeling of being in a trance	**9**
Simple motion images	**8**
Dreams	**3**
Empathy with hypnotist	**7**
Hearing music	**7**
Memories	**8**
Ideas	**8**
Worries	**6**
Normal verbal thinking	**10**

Sherman writes:

> I offer the following viewpoint on very deep hypnosis. As a subject proceeds from light into deeper hypnosis, he progressively experiences and then "turns off" (in order to go still deeper) more and more basic conscious functions. Usually, this involves paying attention to simpler and simpler conscious phenomena. For example, while in light hypnosis, a subject might experience memories involving fairly vivid pictures, as well as sounds, tactile sensations, verbal thoughts, etc. As he progresses deeper, he experiences occasional isolated images, unconnected to verbal thoughts. The subject might also proceed from experiencing complex ideas at light levels to perceiving only visual phenomena, such as great brightness, while at deeper levels.
>
> There are exceptions to the progression toward simpler functioning – most notably "subconscious" phenomena, which typically occur deep and for which the complexity issue is not settled. However, the progression toward more basic functioning still applies; subconscious events can be viewed as extremely basic functions (this view of subconscious and other related phenomena is perhaps best elucidated by Carl Jung).
>
> At the most profound depths, the subject has succeeded in turning off almost all conscious activity. The experiences he does attend to (being everything; feeling oneness with everything; blankness; absolute mental quiet, no thoughts, images, etc.; voidness; nothing happening) are those that are more basic than his individual personality (loss of knowledge of individual identity; no self or ego). In other words, the subject has passed beyond all those cognitive patterns that define him as a specific person and separate

him from other people and his environment. What is left is undifferentiated awareness – the awareness of purely "being," through which the person is identical to everything in the universe.

STUDY FIVE: Brian Feldman's Phenomenological Inquiry into Deep Hypnosis

Our fifth study of deep trance and spiritual experience was done by Brian Eliot Feldman as his PhD dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley. ("A Phenomenological and Clinical Inquiry into Deep Hypnosis," 1976) Dr. Feldman is now a licensed clinical psychologist and a certified child, adolescent, and adult psychoanalyst in the Jungian tradition. He speaks Spanish, French, and Portuguese as well as English and has lectured all over the world. He is a specialist in the impact of infancy and attachment problems on development throughout the life cycle.

His research attempts to answer three questions: 1. What do people experience while in hypnosis when they are given no instructions to experience anything at all? In other words, what actually constitutes the essence of the hypnotic state when it is not influenced by suggestion? 2. Can Spencer Sherman's results about deep trance experiences be replicated? 3. How do different personality characteristics influence what one experiences while in a hypnotic state?

The subjects were five male and five female undergraduates at the University of California, Berkeley, who scored high on the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility. They were trained in self-hypnosis during eight sessions where they were shown how to go quickly and deeply into hypnosis and were introduced to such

phenomena as age-regression, time distortion, hypnotic dreaming, floating, guided imagery, and analgesia. After the training there was a session where the subjects were given a battery of personality tests. They also filled out the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire, a seventy-three-item instrument developed to show changes in consciousness produced by LSD. Two weeks after this baseline personality assessment there was a deep hypnosis session and then two weeks later another deep hypnosis session. Deep hypnosis involves the subjects being told that they will be given no suggestions to experience anything at all during hypnosis, and that while hypnotized they are to try to let go of any expectations that they may have about hypnosis, to go as deeply as possible, and simply let whatever happens happen.

At the beginning of the first hypnosis session the subject was asked about expectations of deep hypnosis and about any past experiences with altered states of consciousness. The subject was told that there were no expectations for what would happen in the session, that the session could last as long as wanted, and to let any experience that happened emerge spontaneously. A countdown induction was given and the subject was asked every five minutes, "What depth are you at?" using a self-report scale of 1 to 100, and "What are you experiencing now?" When the subject wanted to end the session, the subject was brought to a depth of 20 on the self-report scale and the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire was administered. After that the subject was counted out of hypnosis by the experimenter and asked to write down hypnotic experiences. The second hypnosis session occurred two weeks later and was very much like the first, except that the experimenter had a long debriefing conversation with the subject at the end of the session. Everything was tape-recorded and later content-analyzed.

The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire has seven sub-scales:

1. Alteration in thinking (thirteen items) – pertaining to disturbance in concentration, attention, memory, and judgment
2. Disturbed time sense (four items)
3. Loss of control (sixteen items) – concerning fears of losing one's grip on reality, the inability to control emotions, and loss of self-control
4. Meaning change (sixteen items) – feeling of increased ability, understanding, and judgment
5. Affect change (fifteen items) – pertaining to mood changes
6. Body image change (ten items)
7. Somatic change (eleven items) – referring to somatic symptomatology such as dizziness, numbness, nausea, and weakness

Experience in the deep hypnotic state can be distinguished from the everyday waking state by changes in six of the seven sub-scales. Surprisingly, the affect change sub-scale which reflects mood changes did not show any difference from the waking baseline state. This is strange, since seven of the subjects reported feelings of joy and extreme happiness. Feldman writes in a general overview of results:

> On most of the dimensions used to measure ego functioning it was found that the interaction of personality variables and hypnotic experience was minimal. These results pointed to the conclusion that the experiences which occur in deep hypnosis are state-related and not strongly personality-related. … A content analysis of the deep hypnosis protocols revealed that subjects experienced

> pronounced changes in their somatic functioning and in the conception of their body image during the beginning of the hypnotic sessions. Subjects reported a great quantity of vivid imagery throughout the sessions. At very deep levels of hypnosis, which usually occurred one-half hour after the induction, subjects experienced the following phenomena: feeling immersed in blackness, images of floating in an infinite expanse, feeling a sense of oneness with the surroundings, and feeling a sense of awe and wonder.

Experiences in hypnosis fell into four major categories: 1. Changes in physical sensation. 2. Changes in body image. 3. Various types of mental imagery. 4. Transpersonal experiences.

> All ten subjects reported the following (ordered from lightest trance to deepest trance):
>
> Sensation of heat in the body
> Body image "melting"
> Images of nature
> Sensation of upward movement, flying
> Sensation of body floating in an infinite expanse
> Loss of bodily sensations
> Feeling of oneness with surroundings
> Feeling of peacefulness, calmness
>
> Nine of the ten subjects reported:
>
> Sensation of heaviness in the body
> Body image becoming flatter, spreading out
> Numbness in body
> Images of people or animals
> No thoughts or images, feeling of emptiness
> Feeling of being in a different reality

Eight of the ten subjects reported:

Sensation of floating
Tingling sensations in the body
Sensation of downward movement, sinking
Body image bending
Body image becoming larger
Hallucinated loss of body part
Feeling immersed in darkness
Personal memories
Experience of contacting the [true] self

Seven subjects experienced feelings of joy and extreme happiness.

Five subjects experienced feelings of energy moving through the body.

Five subjects experienced feelings of awe and wonder, "religious feelings."

I have listed Feldman's results by number of subjects in order to show how consistently these experiences occur in deep hypnosis across the experimental group. All subjects had transpersonal experiences in profound trance. All of them had several of the following experiences: sensations of flying upward, immersion in darkness, sensations of the body floating in an infinite expanse of potentiality, loss of awareness of the body, feelings of oneness with surroundings accompanied by feelings of peacefulness and equanimity, pure awareness of mind without thoughts or images, sense of contacting a different reality, sense of contacting the true self, feelings of joy and extreme happiness, and feelings of awe and wonder.

Subjects also universally reported that their temporal perspective underwent a profound alteration and that time was experienced as

having no meaning. "I'm out in this blackness; out in a timeless, spaceless place."

STUDY SIX:
Etzel Cardeña's The Phenomenology of Deep Hypnosis: Quiescent and Physically Active

Etzel Cardeña is a professor of psychology at Lund University in Sweden and is director of the Center for Research on Consciousness and Anomalous Psychology. He has authored more than 300 publications and has served as the president of the Society of Psychological Hypnosis (American Psychological Association division 30) and the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis. He published a study in 2005 that compared the phenomenology of deep trance during exercise and relaxation. Relaxation is only one way of entering into the trance state. Historically and cross-culturally, trance has often been induced actively with a variety of techniques, including social situations, music, dancing, high emotions, religious fervor, seizures, fainting, and spirit possession. Is there a difference in the phenomenology of deep trance with relaxation versus deep trance without relaxation (in this case with exercise)?

The subjects were twelve psychologically stable hypnotic virtuosi, each around the age of twenty. Two-thirds were women. Three conditions were tested: relaxation, which involved lying quietly on a bed; pedaling a stationary bike at a comfortable rate; and being on the bike but having a motor do the pedaling. After a thirty count to initiate hypnosis the subject did self-hypnosis procedures to go more deeply into trance. At five-minute intervals the subject was asked for a self-report on depth and what she was experiencing. The three conditions were also tested with no attempt to go into hypnosis, as a control procedure. A variety of questionnaires and interviews were done before and after sessions. The experiences reported below derive from a checklist,

post-session interviews, and experience sampling during the hypnotic sessions. Cardeña writes:

> Many phenomena describing a sense of the body floating and being disembodied were endorsed on the checklist and often mentioned at the beginning of deep hypnosis reports ("floating," "flying," "mind leaving the body," etc.). Participants reported "no sense of time," or time becoming "still" or "slowing down."
>
> Emotions at this [very deep] level of hypnosis were positive overall (e.g., "love," "wonder," and "freedom"). There was, however, one dysphoric emotion, "fear," most prevalent at this stage. Reports during and after the session made it clear that when experiencers reported this fear, it was about the unusualness of the experiences encountered. …
>
> Participants reported a "change of modality" from concepts to images and "having no thoughts." Various items referring to imagery were endorsed at this level, including "increased quality," "sustained sequences," "spontaneous imagery," "greater realness," and "imagery not referable to a sensory modality." The change to imagistic thought may explain the endorsement of "dreaming" as a descriptor for this state. Special mention should be made of the almost universal reports of both "flashes of light," "brightness," and "great obscurity."
>
> Various items associated with transpersonal experiences including "being one with everything," "greater relatedness," "loss of identity," but being "in touch with one's inner self" were common at this level. There was a sense of "being in a different reality" that entailed "profound personal insight," "increased sense of potentiality," and "increased

> meaningfulness." In sum, deep hypnosis was characterized by disconnection with the body and the environment, mostly positive emotions, a switch from thoughts to images, and a sense of connectedness with everything and other transpersonal phenomena.

The study showed that there were unsuggested changes in consciousness in both bike pedaling and relaxation hypnosis, although deeper hypnosis was reported in the relaxation sessions. Cardeña notes that many of the phenomena reported, e.g., "floating out of the body," "merging with the light," and "being one with everything," have also been listed in the literature on mystical, near-death, out-of-body, and shamanic experiences. He writes, "The consistency of reports across participants and with those of other studies on deep hypnosis and anomalous experiences is striking and demands further scrutiny."

Cardeña suggests that different levels of hypnosis such as light vs. very deep are best seen as distinct modes of experiencing rather than as changes in intensity of trance. There is a shift from conceptual thinking to imagery, the sense of the body is left behind, time slows down and becomes meaningless, a bright light appears. All of these and others indicate changes in the mode of experiencing rather than a single unitary trance state. Because of the consistency of reports from the members of his own study and how well they agree with the transpersonal experiences reported in other studies, he posits that there are common neurological underpinnings for the different modes of experiencing in hypnosis.

Conclusion

Jonathan Shear writes in his article "On Mystical Experience as Support for the Perennial Philosophy" (*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 2 [Summer 1994]):

Let us begin by outlining four theses often associated with the "core" of the perennial philosophy: (1) The phenomenal world is the manifestation of a transcendental ground; (2) human beings are capable of attaining immediate knowledge of that ground; 3) in addition to their phenomenal egos, human beings possess a transcendental Self which is of the same or like nature with that transcendental ground; and (4) this identification is life's chief end or purpose.

These theses often have been closely related to mystical experiences, especially to what are generally described as the two "core" types of mystical experience. The first of these, often called the "introvertive" is characterized as mystical experience (or "IME"), being a pure, contentless awareness, gained at the depths of self within, and completely devoid of all determinate phenomenological contents (sense perceptions, images, thoughts, emotions, sense of individual identity, etc.) whatsoever. 2 The second, or "extrovertive" mystical experience ("EME"), is characterized as being awareness of this same empirically contentless, abstract, transcendental "reality" as underlying every object in one's experiences, external (trees, the sky, etc.) as well as internal (thoughts, feelings, etc.). 3 It is not hard to see why these experiences have traditionally been closely associated with the theses of the perennial philosophy. For the IME experience could easily appear to give some empirical support to the notion of a transcendental ground of self, beyond the phenomenal ego, within. And the EME experience would appear to give prima facie support to both the thesis that there exists a transcendental ground to the phenomenal world and the thesis that this ground is at least closely akin to, if not the same as, that of the self within. Indeed, these conclusions have often been drawn by mystics and perennialists throughout history.

The six studies cited in this article have shown us that people who go into a profoundly deep hypnotic trance almost always reach states similar to introvertive and extrovertive mystical experience. As a method, then, trance work could potentially cause vast numbers of people to very rapidly have spiritual experience of what they perceive as the numinous reality behind all appearances. Judging from work on the healing powers of psychoactive substances, mystical trance work that causes such experiences may also be profoundly healing in its impact.

Is there really a numinous reality? Is there actually a transcendental ground? Does deep trance work allow you to explore your connection with transcendent being? These questions are beyond the scope of this book. Evidence can be found in the parapsychological literature, in shamanism, and in the lives of the miracle-working saints. Answers, too, will depend on future experimental research relating trance and the paranormal.

Part 2 of this book explores ways that trance work has been used to develop spiritual experience.

Part 3 explores evidence for trance work in several mystic-religious disciplines.

Part 4 reprints four of the six deep hypnosis studies and points out where you can find the other two on the internet.

Chapter 2
A Phenomenological Map of Trance Depth

In order to get an overview of inner experience at different levels of hypnosis, especially the deeper levels, I have used data from the six studies mentioned in chapter 1 to construct a phenomenological map of trance depth. Both Spencer Sherman and Brian Feldman list trance experiences by their subjects' personal ratings of trance depth. Unfortunately, they use different rating scales.

I have used Sherman's sequence as the backbone for my phenomenological map, placing experiences from the other five studies where I think they should fit in Sherman's sequence. When you look at the map below, you should understand that all of Sherman's list of inner experiences are presented the way he originally arranged them and the inner experiences from other studies are inserted into Sherman's arrangement.

Sherman's research used the following self-report depth scale:

0 – normal; awake
20 – light hypnosis
30 – moderate hypnosis
40 – deep hypnosis
(scale is open-ended)

Sherman writes:

> It is evident that the depth scale is designed to measure depth while conveying no implicit suggestions about what is "supposed" to be experienced. … In pilot testing, subjects reported full comprehension of the scale and satisfaction with using it. The only additional piece of information given to the subjects was that 40 is about the point at which all the most difficult suggestions they had been given in their training are fully real and/or realizable. (Sherman dissertation p. 7)
>
> The area between 40 and the greatest depth reported by each subject in either session was divided into thirds … This normalized the scaling, which varied widely above 40 from subject to subject … it allowed a subject who reported 300 as deepest to be directly compared to one who reported a maximum depth of 90. From the remarkable across-subject consistency of experience-at-depth reports … it appears that the implicit assumption underlying this procedure – that all subjects would reach approximately the same experiential deepest area – was borne out.
>
> It can be seen that consistent replies to the Experience Placement form are given by the independent subjects; for most experiences, there exists very good agreement about where on the depth continuum a particular experience occurs. For example, "loss of touch with body" is reported as occurring on the very deep section of the continuum by 10 out of 10 subjects ($X2 = 20.00$, $p < .001$). (Sherman dissertation p. 15)

My phenomenological map of trance depth is an abstraction from a number of individuals involved in different studies. Any one individual may have only some of the common experiences,

or have other experiences altogether, and the experiences may appear at different levels.

After contemplating my phenomenological map, I then divided trance depth into six levels:

Unitive
Visionary
Profound
Deep
Medium
Light

Here is my phenomenological map, running from deepest to lightest trance:

Unitive Trance

Sherman	**Being everything, feeling oneness with everything**
Hilgard	**A sense of oneness**
Cardeña	**Being one with everything, greater relatedness**
Feldman	**Feeling of oneness with surroundings**
Sherman	**Voidness; absolute mental quiet: no thoughts, images, etc.**
Feldman	**No thoughts or images – feeling of emptiness**
Sherman	**Loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego"**
Cardeña	**Loss of identity**
Cardeña	**Being in touch with one's inner self**
Cardeña	**Merging with pure light or energy and finding one's innermost core**
Feldman	**Experience of contacting the self**

Tart	Sense of infinite potentiality
Cardeña	Increased sense of potentality
Hilgard	A feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable
Feldman	Feelings of joy and extreme happiness
Feldman	Feelings of awe and wonder
Tart	Experimenter's identity: Just a voice, a tiny ripple at the far fringes of an infinite sea of consciousness
Cardeña	Increased meaningfulness

Visionary Trance

Sherman	Other realities; totally real hallucinations involving all senses
Cardeña	Sense of "being in another reality"
Feldman	Feeling of being in a different reality
Sherman	Feeling totally free
Sherman	Complete loss of touch with external environment
Sherman	Feeling of motion
Sherman	Feeling totally spread out
Sherman	Mind fully separated and physically distant from body
Sherman	Process of dissolving or spreading out – mind leaving the body and spreading
Sherman	Thoughts widely spaced
Sherman	Dream sentences and images

Profound Trance

Sherman	**Warmth or cold**
Feldman	**Feeling of coldness in the body**
Sherman	**Feeling totally inside one's head**
Sherman	**Loss of touch with body**
Tart	**Body just a thing left behind**
Tart	**Peacefulness no longer meaningful [without body]**
Hilgard	**A loss of any connection with the body**
Feldman	**Numbness in body**
Feldman	**Loss of bodily sensations**
Sherman	**Occasional isolated images**
Sherman	**Great darkness**
Cardeña	**Great obscurity, great darkness, a sense of void (alternating with light)**
Feldman	**Feeling immersed in darkness**
Feldman	**Sensation of body floating in an infinite space**
Feldman	**Feeling of peacefulness, calmness**
Feldman	**Throbbing sensations in body**
Feldman	**Sensation of energy moving through the body**
Tart	**Experimenter's identity: A remote thing**
Sherman	**No sense of time**
Tart	**Time becomes meaningless**

Hilgard	A failure of time to have any meaning
Cardeña	Time slows down, no sense of time, time becomes still
Sherman	Feeling afraid (because of the uncertainty of what is happening)
Feldman	Feelings of anxiety
Tart	Awareness of the environment low
Cardeña	Loss of touch with the environment

Deep Trance

Sherman	Feeling arms are very large
Sherman	Thinking in images rather than words
Cardeña	From concepts to images; having no thoughts
Cardeña	Spontaneous imagery, increased quality, sustained sequences, greater realness
Feldman	Images of people and animals
Feldman	Personal memories
Feldman	Auditory hallucinations (occurring with visual imagery)
Feldman	Images of nature
Feldman	Images of geometric shapes
Sherman	Feelings of joy
Hilgard	The pleasantness of the experience
Cardeña	Love, wonder, freedom
Dave Elman	Euphoric coma. Unresponsive, euphoric, spontaneous catatonia and anesthesia, but fully aware of what is going on in the environment

Sherman	**Separating of parts of the mind**
Sherman	**Partial loss of touch with the external environment**
Sherman	**Feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head**
Sherman	**Great brightness**
Tart	**Experimenter's identity: distant**
Sherman	**Feeling of floating**
Feldman	**Sensation of upward movement, flying**
Cardeña	**Floating, flying, mind leaving the body**
Feldman	**Body image becoming flatter, spreading out**
Sherman	**Joining another mind; presence of another**
Sherman	**Profound personal or philosophical insights**
Cardeña	**Difficulty remembering everyday activities**
Cardeña	**Suddenly remembering forgotten events**

Light and Medium Trance

Feldman	**Body image becoming smaller**
Feldman	**Hallucinated loss of body part**
Feldman	**Body image "melting"**
Feldman	**Body image becoming larger**
Feldman	**Body image bending**
Cardeña	**Changes in body image, e.g., "my hands have been growing"**

Feldman	Sensation of downward movement, sinking
Cardeña	Feeling light
Feldman	Tingling sensations in the body
Cardeña	Spinning
Feldman	Sensation of body spinning
Sherman	Feeling calm and quiet
Feldman	Sensation of heat in the body
Sherman	Heaviness of body
Feldman	Sensation of heaviness
Feldman	Sensation of floating
Feldman	Recurring thoughts
Sherman	Spontaneous auditory experiences
Sherman	Flashes of light or color
Cardeña	Flashes of light
Sherman	Pictures and images
Sherman	Wavelike phenomena
Sherman	Feeling relaxed
Sherman	Hypersensitivity of body
Sherman	Emotional experiences

Sherman	**Simple images**
Sherman	**Feeling of being in a trance**
Sherman	**Simple motion images**
Sherman	**Dreams**
Sherman	**Empathy with the hypnotist**
Sherman	**Hearing music**
Sherman	**Memories**
Sherman	**Ideas**
Sherman	**Worries**
Sherman	**Normal verbal thinking**

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Here is the map of trance depth running from lightest to deepest trance, showing inner experiences without reference to the source article:

Light to Medium Trance

Hypersensitivity of the body
Feeling in a trance
Relaxed
Auditory and visual imagery
Flashes of light
Body feels heavy
Warmth
Spinning
Floating

Sinking
Lightness
Changes to the body image:
Big, small, parts disappear, parts grow or shrink, bending, melting

Deep Trance

Floating and flying
Body spreads out and flattens
Great brightness
Consciousness is located in a particular part of the head
Losing touch with the environment
Thinking in images rather than words
Feelings of joy and wonder
Unresponsive, euphoric state
Spontaneous catatonia and anesthesia

Profound Trance

Loss of touch with the environment
Time slows and stops
Sensations of energy moving in the body
Great darkness
Sensation of body floating in an infinite expanse
Peace, calm, equanimity
Loss of touch with the body
Warmth or cold

Visionary Trance

Thoughts widely spaced
Mind leaving the body and spreading out
Mind fully separated and physically distant from body
Feeling of motion
Complete loss of touch with external environment
Feeling totally free

Other realities: totally real hallucinations involving all senses

Unitive Trance

Increased meaningfulness
Feelings of awe and wonder, joy and happiness
A feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable
Being in touch with one's inner self
Merging with pure light or energy and finding one's innermost core
Sense of infinite potentiality
Loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego"
Voidness, absolute mental quiet: no thoughts, images, etc.
Oneness, being everything, feeling oneness with everything

Chapter 3
Hypnotic Simulation of Near-Death Experience

The majority of near-death experiences are also mystical experiences. One method for proving this is to have people who have had a near-death experience rate the experience on Ralph Hood's Mysticism Scale, a well-respected instrument in mysticism research. This is a thirty-two-item questionnaire that yields scores on eight conceptual categories related to mystical experience (Ralph Hood, "The Construction and Preliminary Validation of a Measure of Reported Mystical Experience," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 14, no. 1 [1975]: 29):

1. **Ego Loss** – losing oneself into a greater unity.
2. **Unity** – perception of the unity of all things.
3. **Inner Subjectivity** – perception of an inner awareness in all things.
4. **Timelessness/Spacelessness** – transcending spatiotemporal limits.
5. **Noetic Quality** – feels the experience is a source of valid direct knowledge.
6. **Ineffability** – words cannot express the experience.
7. **Positive Affect** – joy, bliss.
8. **Sacredness** – intrinsic holiness of the experience.

Dr. Bruce Greyson is a professor of psychiatry and neurobehavioral sciences at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He is recognized as a world leader in the scientific study of near-death experiences and has been the director of research for the International Association for Near-Death Studies since 1981. Here is the abstract for his article, "Congruence Between Near-Death and Mystical Experience."

> Near-death experiences, altered states during a brush with death, may include mystical features like a sense of sacredness and divine union, timelessness/spacelessness, positive mood, noetic quality, and ineffability. We quantified mystical elements in near-death experience by comparing responses on the Mysticism Scale of 292 near-death experiencers and 34 persons who had come close to death without near-death experiences. Two thirds of near-death experiencers reported mystical experiences during their brush with death, compared to none of the comparison survivors. Near-death experiencers scored higher on the Mysticism Scale than did nonexperiencers; they endorsed noetic quality, positive affect, and unity most often and ego loss, timelessness/spacelessness, and ineffability least often. Depth of near-death experience was correlated highly with scores on the Mysticism Scale, but factor analysis of features during the brush with death yielded two distinct factors representing mystical and near-death elements, suggesting that near-death experiences have commonalities with, but can be differentiated from, mystical experience. (*The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 24, no. 4 [2014])

Dr. Paul Schenk, a clinical psychologist and hypnotherapist practicing in Atlanta, Georgia, has developed a hypnosis method for inducing near-death experiences in people who are not dying. (*The Hypnotic Use of Waking Dreams: Exploring Near-Death Experi-*

ences Without the Flatlines [Bethel, CT: Crown House Publishing, 2006], pp. 1, 15–17, 20, 114 for quotes below.) After bringing the client down into a trance, Dr. Schenk might say, "As you continue to relax and go even more deeply within, you … find yourself beginning to imagine being someone in a movie; a person whose story will contain experiences that will be *timely, useful, and constructive* for your own life." The client then begins to live through first-person imagery scenes from the story-life and to talk to the therapist about them. Dr. Schenk calls these "waking dreams." After some time exploring the life, Dr. Schenk will guide the client to the occasion of the story-person's death. Frequently, experiences very similar to near-death experiences will ensue. Here are some comments by clients generated during the waking dream process:

> When I died I had an overwhelming experience of calm and peace. I was floating above the ocean and felt absolute harmony with everything around me.
>
> I was trying to touch my body, but it was too far away and everyone disappeared. My grandmother is there! She took my hand! Now she is guiding me, telling me to come with her. I see the Light now, a big sun. I'm so happy to be with my grandmother again!
>
> Wow! The light is so bright! All my guides are here and the masters too. The love is unbelievable.

Dr. Schenk reports the following:

> When my therapy clients experience the death of the fictional person they were in a waking dream, they report very similar experiences to those of a true NDE. These occur independent of both the person's religious background and prior knowledge of NDE phenomena. Again, not all of the

phenomena are experienced by each client, but the pattern includes the following.

1. Clients report a sense of floating out of the body (OBE) of the dream character at the moment of death. They typically report looking down at the body.
2. Clients report an intense calm, tranquility, and/or peacefulness.
3. Clients engage in a life-review experience in which they survey their dream life much as described in the NDE literature.
4. For many clients, if not most, there is a sense of the presence of a guide or angel or significant "other" person who facilitates the life review and helps provide important insights or perspectives.
5 Some clients report profound experiences of insight, unconditional love, or forgiveness by themselves and/ or by the ones they define as guides or angels or God.
6. Clients often describe a sense of watching the character go off into the Light, often accompanied by a loved one or some type of spiritual being.

There are methods for producing a "brush with death" during hypnosis other than the waking dream process. Here is a spiritual experience produced by the psychologist Jean Houston using trance alone. In 1970 she hypnotized *Time* magazine researcher Clare Mead, who had a mystical experience, some of which is reported below. Note that the brush with death is produced by a symbolic death and rebirth.

> [Dr. Houston then initiated a "death" and "rebirth" cycle. Ms. Mead chose a star in the night sky to symbolize her life.] "… gradually I was able to relinquish my hold as I watched it disappear, leaving only vast, empty blackness. … Then, still

> under Dr. Houston's direction, I made an enormous effort to revive my poor star. At first I thought to myself that this would probably occur as the gradual brightening of a star in the blackness. But instead, and all of a sudden, I saw the sky suddenly flash into total, blinding white light. … I knew with incredible clarity that life is the victor in the struggle against death, not in the sense of an afterlife in a far-away heaven, but in the certainty that life is eternal, despite death. I was overcome with the joy of this truth, and I wanted to run out on the street and shout it to the New Yorkers plodding homeward in the gray smog from their dull downtown offices, unaware that a sea of beauty, life and love surrounded and sustained them. ("Mysticism in the Laboratory," *Time* magazine, October 5, 1970)

Here is a trance-induced mystical experience in a young cancer patient reported by Dr. Ronald Havens. Note that it takes place for the client when she is highly aware of her impending death.

> Several years after her graduation … Helen … called me and asked for my help with her intense pain. She had cancer, untreatable terminal cancer. During our first session I guided her into a trance and told her simply that her unconscious mind could now use the openness of her trance state to provide those things she needed. Within a few minutes she stiffened a bit, then smiled broadly and just sat there smiling for over 30 minutes.
>
> Afterwards she explained that she had just been sitting there in a kind of blank waiting state when she began to feel surrounded by a warm light that became brighter and brighter and eventually became such an intensely brilliant light that the energy of it seemed to penetrate every cell in her body, at which point she could no longer tell where the

> light began and where she ended. She felt herself merge with the warm energy of that light, and then she "knew" that the light was everything around her, a vast unity of loving energy that is everything and everyone. She said that this "understanding" was followed by a feeling of overwhelming peace and by a realization that at that moment she was feeling no pain at all.
>
> Helen was quite excited as she told me all of this afterwards and even cried a bit, apparently tears of happiness or joy. She said she was no longer afraid of death, and no longer afraid of her pain. I was later told that she continued to use trance on her own until her death a few months later.

Given these cases, we can see at least three different ways of experiencing a brush with death. The symbolic death and rebirth of a star (Houston). Actual impending death (Havens). And a hypnotically induced fictional life and death (Schenk).

Since something very similar to a near-death/mystical experience can be triggered by living through and dying in a fictional life-story during trance regardless of religious orientation or prior knowledge of NDEs, it suggests that there are brain mechanisms that mediate this experience. But why have these mechanisms evolved? What is the function of a near-death/mystical experience? Human civilization only began about 40,000 years ago; prior to that close brushes with death were a far more common experience. The near-death/mystical experience functions to keep a person alive in horrific circumstances. There is dissociation from the body and its pain (OBE). There is an experience of calm tranquility. There are feelings of love and forgiveness that bring the person back into bonding with the band of those who will help him or her survive. For social animals like human beings, being alone is next door to being dead. We need other people to survive, literally as well as psychologically. Love and forgiveness also generate the will to

live, a feeling that helps a person survive deep wounds.

Schenk found that it is possible to initiate a process similar to a near-death experience by using hypnosis to create a fictional story of a life and death. But why is it that hypnosis can mimic a near-death/mystical experience?

The neurologist Dr. Thomas Lempert and his colleagues in Berlin videotaped episodes of induced fainting and then interviewed the subjects afterward. When they compared the results with a sample of near-death experiences compiled by Dr. Raymond Moody, they found that fainting and brushes with death are very similar in their effects.

Experience	Near-death (%)	Fainting (%)
Out-of-body	26	16
Visual perceptions	23	40
Audible noise or voice	17	60
Feeling of peace, painlessness	32	35
Appearance of light	14	17
Life review	32	0
Entering another world	32	47
Encountering preternatural beings	23	20
Tunnel experience	9	8
Knowledge of the future	6	0

(Table from Kevin Nelson, M.D., "The Brain at Death's Portal," chap. 5 in *The Spiritual Doorway in the Brain: A Neurologist's Search for the God Experience* [New York: Dutton, 2011]. See also T. Lempert, M. Bauer, and D. Schmidt, "Syncope: A Videometric Analysis of 56 Episodes of Transient Cerebral Hypoxia," *Annals of Neurology* 35, no. 2 [August 1994]: 233–37.)

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The neurologist Kevin Nelson examined fifty-five cases of near-death experience. One of the questions he asked was what physical events preceded the brush with death: "The overwhelming majority of conditions that my subjects shared had the potential to cause a temporary interruption in blood flow or oxygen to the brain." These included fainting, heart disturbances, near-drowning, violent trauma, and surgical events.

There is a little-known method for the fast induction of hypnosis which relies on loss of blood to the brain. (Joseph Whitlow, MD, "A Rapid Method for the Induction of Hypnosis," in *Experimental Hypnosis*, edited by Leslie LeCron [New York: Macmillan, 1956], 58–63) The subject is standing and looking up almost directly overhead. "Then the operator presses the right thumb and index finger against the vagus nerve and carotid artery on each side of the Adam's apple at about the level of the cricoid cartilage, leaving the larynx free of pressure so that breathing is not mechanically obstructed." The operator gives strong suggestions for going into hypnosis while applying pressure. Usually within about 10 seconds the subject goes partially limp and is lowered into a reclining chair. In the dazed and confused state of near-loss of consciousness the subject becomes extremely suggestible and passes into the hypnotic trance. Similarly, when intravenous barbiturates are used to induce hypnosis, the subject has to be maintained at near-loss of consciousness to produce increased suggestibility. Whitlow and his clinic have used this carotid/vagus pressure method hundreds of times and, of course, he warns of its extreme danger when not done by a medical expert. Statistically, 90 percent of the attempts made were successful, with 80 percent of those hypnotized reaching a light or medium trance the first time, and deeper stages with more inductions. Subjects don't find the inductions unpleasant and willingly submit to further sessions.

We can now begin to give an answer to the question of what it is that connects hypnosis with near-death experience. Both are suggestible trance states. In a near-death experience a trance state is usually brought on by hypoxia due to a loss of blood flow to the brain. The trance state plus a lived experience of a brush with death initiates the neural mechanisms – be they chemical, electrical, or structural – that produce a near-death experience. In the hypnotic creation of near-death experiences, a trance state is induced by one of a number of well-known hypnotic techniques. When a lived experience of death is added to the trance state – be it symbolic (Houston), impending (Havens), or fictional (Schenk) – the neural mechanisms that produce a near-death/mystical experience are activated. A hypnosis near-death experience can mimic a real near-death experience because both the hypnosis experience and the near-death experience are a trance state plus a brush with death.

We know from the studies being presented in this book that mystical-type experiences can be found at the deepest levels of trance. Now that we know that near-death states are also trance states, we can see that the mystical elements in trance may have evolved within the near-death matrix. I have speculated above that the near-death experience functions to keep a person alive by dissociation from pain, the induction of calm tranquility, the experience of love and bliss, re-bonding with the group, and an increase in the will to live. Dr. Greyson tells us that the features of a mystical experience that are most often found in a near-death experience are a sense of the unity of all things, the positive emotions of joy and bliss, and the feeling of experiencing valid direct knowledge. Inasmuch as these things facilitate the life-saving functions of a near-death experience, they would evolve in human beings as part of our trance capabilities.

What are the neural mechanisms that mediate a near-death experience? One possibility: Dr. E. L. Lloyd has examined studies on hypoxia and found that "abnormalities in the cerebral neurochemistry involving one or more of the interconnected neurotransmitters dopamine, 5-hydroxytryptamine, and beta-endorphin had been reported in all the conditions associated with hallucinations." ("Points: Hallucinations, Hypoxia, and Neurotransmitters," *British Medical Journal* 292 [March 29, 1986]: 903)

We wouldn't want to use the carotid pressure technique because it is very dangerous, but the insight that oxygen level in the brain is related to trance leads to the idea that combining breathwork with ordinary hypnotic induction may produce powerful ways to achieve deep hypnosis and hence mystical experience.

Changes in breathing can by themselves produce spiritual experiences. In Stanislav Grof's Holotropic Breathwork prolonged rapid breathing is combined with listening to music: "On occasion … faster breathing leads to progressive relaxation, dissolution of boundaries, and experience with Oneness with other people, with the universe, and with God. The breather progressively enters a mystical state without having to face any emotionally or physically challenging material. This can be associated with visions of white or golden light." (Stanislav Grof and Christina Grof, *Holotropic Breathwork: A New Approach to Self-Exploration and Therapy* [Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010], 68)

Ladislas Meduna administered carbogen (usually 30 percent carbon dioxide and 70 percent oxygen) to his patients to help induce therapeutic abreaction. One subject reported: "After the second breath came an onrush of color, first a predominant sheet of beautiful rosy-red, following which came successive sheets of brilliant color and design, some geometric, some fanciful and graceful. ...

Then the colors separated; my soul drawing apart from the physical being, was drawn upward seemingly to leave the earth and to go upward where it reached a greater Spirit with Whom there was a communion, producing a remarkable, new relaxation and deep security." (Ladislas J. Meduna, 1950, *Carbon Dioxide Therapy: A Neurophysiological Treatment of Nervous Disorders* [Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publishing, 1950]. Quote is taken from the Wikipedia entry on carbogen.)

Renaud Van Quekelberghe is a Belgian psychologist who is a professor at the University of Koblenz-Landau. He has written books on a variety of topics, including psychotherapy, meditation, yoga, and transpersonal psychology. In 1994 he and two colleagues published an article on their attempt to simulate near-death experiences using deep relaxation and the hypnotic induction of specific NDE components. (Renaud Van Quekelberghe, Peter Göbel, and Eleonore Hertwick, "Simulation of Near-Death and Out-Of-Body Experiences under Hypnosis," *Imagination, Cognition and Personality* 14, no. 2 [1994–95]: 151–64)

The subjects were twenty-one psychology students who volunteered for the experiment and were ignorant of the literature on NDEs. Each student went through a forty-five-minute relaxation/hypnosis session that was enhanced with audio-visual effects. They filled out questionnaires before and after the session. Each session tried to simulate the phases of a near-death experience. Here is the authors' description of these phases.

1. **Relaxation: 10-15 minutes.** Based on the principles of autogenic training. Early introduction of dissociations, such as: "Your mind/your body."

2. **Induction of OBE:**
    a. Floating over the university campus.
    b. Floating above one's own body in the experimental room (near the ceiling, diagonally in front of the subject).
3. **Life course in retrospect:** Induction of a spontaneous, automatic emergence of past life events, similar to a slide show.
    a. Childhood
    b. Adolescence
    c. Adulthood
4. **Tunnel experience:**
    a. At first, rather like in a dark room.
    b. Acceleration in a long tunnel, slanted upwards.
    c. Light at the end of the tunnel.
    (From 4c up to and including 5d: Light is presented by means of a lamp with a dimmer while gradually increasing brightness to maximum intensity.)
5. **Light experience:**
    a. Encountering a golden light.
    b. Description of ecstatic feelings.
    (From 5c onward: Use of chimes and triangles.)
    c. Achievement of unlimited understandings within the light/harmonious sounds.
    d. Pulsating light.
    (At 5d: Rhythmic variation of light intensity, similar to a throbbing.)
    e. Visions: figures of light, landscapes of light.
    (At 5e: All lights gradually fade out.)
6. **Gradual return to the present situation:**
    a. Emergence of an obstacle (river or wall).
    b. Reuniting with one's body.
    c. Transition to normal consciousness.

The authors conclude that "with the help of deep relaxation and hypnotic methods, NDE components can be simulated relatively well and can lead to at least short-term positive changes in consciousness." Informally they did more sessions with a highly responsive subset of the subjects from the simulation experiment, using a shortened and enhanced form of the procedure, and concluded that NDE simulations can be improved and intensified with the addition of short training sessions. Some of these relatively quick simulations were marked with strong ecstatic feelings and some resulted in spiritual visions, so it looks as if the simulation approach is a promising technology for using trance as a shortcut to spiritual experience.

One thing that is missing from the simulation procedure and that might be added is the hypnotic enactment of a brush with death between the relaxation phase (1) and the induction of OBE phase (2). This could trigger the neurological components of a near-death experience and produce a powerful intensification of the results.

Turning up a dimmable lamp is used to simulate the increase of light during the tunnel phase and the light experience phase. There are a number of other physical methods that could be used to enhance the simulation:

1) A flotation tank could be used to simulate the sense of being out of the body.
2 A heater could be used to simulate feelings of warmth often encountered in hypnosis.
3) Administration of a gas mixture with a higher level of carbon dioxide could simulate the loss of oxygen in a near-death experience.
4) A metronome could be used to simulate the slowing down of time. (See experiments by Bernard Aaronson.)

5) Chimes and triangles are used in the simulation but there is other music that is known to promote spiritual experience that could also be used. (See the chapter in this book on Helen Bonny and her system of Guided Imagery and Music.)
6) Ketamine and DMT are drugs that induce experiences similar to NDEs. Very light doses along with trance work could cause vivid simulations of near-death experiences. (I once heard John Lily, the inventor of the sensory deprivation flotation tank, talk about his use of ketamine in the tank. Note that ketamine can slow the death of neurons from hypoxia in the brain, so some people have speculated that molecules that act like ketamine may be generated during a near-death experience to protect the neurons, while the features of the near-death experience are side-effects of these molecules. [See Shayla Love, "Taking Ketamine Can Feel a Lot Like a Near-Death Experience," *Vice*, February 12, 2019, https://tonic.vice.com/en_us/article/8xy8kv/taking-ketamine-can-feel-a-lot-like-a-near-death-experience.]

I would love to run experiments using these aids to simulation, but I am wary that using physical interventions may get in the way of the development of deep trance and the interpersonal relationship on which it depends. Milton Erickson writes:

> Numerous experiments by the author and his colleagues, in which … experienced subjects watched silent pendulums or listened to soft music or to metronomes, disclosed that imaginary aids were much more effective than actual apparatus. The same findings were obtained with naïve subjects. Medical students were divided into two groups, one of which stared at a crystal ball and the other merely tried to visualize a crystal ball. The latter group gave

> the more rapid and better results. The experiment was repeated by having the second group listen to a metronome while the first group was instructed to depend upon auditory imagery of a metronome. Again, the imaginary aid proved the more effective. Numerous variations of this investigation yielded similar results. In brief, the utilization of imagery rather than actual apparatus gives the subject the advantage of utilizing his actual capabilities without being hampered by an adjustment to nonessential externalities. This has been found true with experienced subjects as well as naïve subjects, and in the whole range of imagery from visual to kinesthetic. …
>
> [One of Erickson's subjects writes:] "When I listen to the imaginary metronome, it speeds up or slows down, gets louder or fainter, as I start to go into a trance, and I just drift along. With the real metronome it remains distractingly constant, and it keeps pulling me back to reality instead of letting me drift along into a trance. The imaginary metronome is changeable and always fits in with just the way I'm thinking and feeling, but I have to fit myself to the real one." (See Milton Erickson's article on Deep Trance in this book.)

Here is a closing speculation. We know that close brushes with death during combat can produce intense symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. I suggest that the near-death/mystical experience is an antidote for the generation of PTSD. If I am correct, hypnotically produced mystical experiences could be a very powerful method for the treatment of PTSD. Rape is another horrific experience that can produce PTSD. Of women who are raped, 94 percent experience post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms during the two weeks following the rape and 30 percent of women report PTSD symptoms nine months later. Rape, however, does

not induce lack of oxygen in the brain like physical injury does, so it is not associated with near-death experience. Hypnotically induced mystical experience may, however, have a powerful impact on the PTSD induced by rape.

Chapter 4
Waking-Reality Illusions (WRIs)

There is an altered state where a person is fully conscious in what appears to be physical reality, but that reality is only a psychological construct. Since the reality seems to come via sensory input, the person believes that it actually exists. This fully conscious illusory reality state manifests primarily in out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences, but it is also found in very deep trance. In the chapter on near-death simulations I have tried to show that near-death experiences really are trance experiences. And, of course, out-of-body experiences are frequently part of near-death experiences. So, there is a case to be made that out-of-body and near-death are both trance occurrences. Spencer Sherman in his research on deep trance reports that some of his subjects encountered other realities. They had totally real hallucinations involving all of the senses. I have called this state a Waking Reality Illusion (WRI). In this paper I will try to outline some of its parameters.

William G. Roll became a professional parapsychologist starting in the late 1950s. He was on the staff of the Parapsychology Department at Duke University and was a founding member and president of the Parapsychology Association. In his autobiographical essay, "My Search for the Soul," he describes his first out-of-body experience at age sixteen.

> I get up one night and find myself looking at my body, which is still on the bed. It's more strange than frightening. I discover that I can repeat the experience if I wake up with a peculiar tingly sensation in my chest and face. My consciousness, when I find myself out of the body, is otherwise the same as my ordinary, waking self. There is nothing numinous about these episodes, and I never venture into distant places. The farthest I get is the front yard. But the experience is as real as getting up in the morning and going to school. … [Through reading] I discover that many others have had [out-of-body experiences]. Unlike mine, the journeys include visits to distant family or friends and exploring other-worldly realms. … There is a similarity between my OBEs and those I read about. Both are preceded by sensations of mild electric-like shocks in the body and both are as vivid as everyday life, if not more-so. (William G. Roll, "My Search for the Soul," in *Body Mind Spirit: Exploring the Parapsychology of Spirituality*, edited by Charles T. Tart [Charlottesville VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 1997], 50)

Some time ago I talked to a prominent Washington, DC, interior designer at a literary party about her many out-of-body experiences. "On a scale of one to ten, from faint to very vivid," I asked her, "how would you rate your experience of being out of the body?" "Like going to the grocery store," she replied.

The psychologist Susan Blackmore concluded, after reviewing six surveys which contained questions about out-of-body experience, including a random sample of the city of Charlottesville, Virginia, and a random sample of the population of Iceland, that the incidence of out-of-body experience is probably around 10 percent of the population. (Susan J. Blackmore, *Beyond the Body: An Investigation of Out-*

of-the-Body Experiences [London: Heinemann, 1982], 90) Within the percentage of people who report OBEs, 50 to 60 percent report having only one out-of-body event. In a collection of 302 cases solicited by the Institute for Psychophysical Research via advertising, 60.9 percent of respondents had one event, 8.9 percent had two, 5.3 percent had three, 2.3 percent had four, 1.7 percent had five, and 20.9 percent had six or more OBE events. (Celia Green, *Out-of-the-Body Experiences* [New York: Ballantine Books, 1973], 5–6) This suggests that people with OBEs can be classified into two types: frequent experiencers and infrequent experiencers. People who have multiple OBEs are around 1 percent to 2 percent of the general population. The Institute report divides cases into those that describe a complete duplicate body and those that describe no body at all or only a sense of having a body without being able to see it. Twenty percent of their cases had a complete duplicate body. Susan Blackmore points out that other case collections have shown higher rates of duplicate bodies, citing a 75 percent figure for one study and a 43 percent figure for another (p. 66).

My next-door neighbor, a materials expert who has worked in physics labs and on space satellite projects, has had two out-of-body experiences. During the first he found himself floating up near the ceiling, looking down on his body. After a time it occurred to him that he could go elsewhere. He rose upward through the ceiling, seeing all the layers of flooring material between the rooms as he went, and hovered over the city. He became excited and it pulled him back into his body. Seeing one's body lying in bed and experiences of moving through physical objects can both be used as evidence that one is no longer in the physical body.

Near-death experiences often begin with an out-of-body experience. Here is an example from the International Association for Near Death Studies website, which is at http://iands.org/experiences/nde-accounts/705-ascension.html.

> The last thing I remember was the doctors talking to each other at the hospital … I could see my body below me for a few seconds, and then I was swept away at what felt like a great speed. I could see many colors of light on both sides of me, all starting to blend together. As I felt my speed increase, the colors appeared to become a blinding white tunnel … I visited different types of worlds, many with different colored skies. … It felt as if I was suddenly stopped in a state or a plane of consciousness, totally surrounded by a … golden light. There were all kinds of spirit life forms that I could identify with, and quite a few that I could not. The feeling of peace was there, and for the first time in my life I felt a powerful unconditional love entering and surrounding my being. This love was all fulfilling, and I felt no need for anything else. I desired nothing but to remain in this place for an eternity. I have no idea how long I remained there, for time no longer had any meaning to me. … I then felt the sensation of swift passage again, and even though I tried, I could not reverse the process and return to that beautiful realm … I again heard the doctors' voices. A sense of such great loss and sadness filled my spirit for there had been so much to learn, and it seemed that all of the love and peace that I had felt was gone.

Note that the subject says that "time no longer had any meaning to me." The disappearance of time is a typical event that occurs at the level of profound trance.

There is a 2,000-item bibliography on out-of-body experiences available on the internet. About 500 of these are scientific books and papers (http://obebibliography.info/). Near-death experiences (NDEs) frequently begin with an out-of-body experience. IANDS, the International Association for Near Death Studies, maintains a 1,000-item bibliography on NDEs on the web.

Do people who have out-of-body experiences actually leave the body? Here is another quote from William Roll that sheds some light on this question.

> One night I wake up in one of the clearest OBEs I have had. I step out of bed in my OBE body and walk down the hallway to the living room, which I find bathed in moonlight. As I stand in the doorway, I marvel at the clarity of the view – and regret that I cannot verify that I am actually there. I notice that a shadow from a circular side table covers a corner of the rug. I have no way of knowing, I tell myself, that the shadow will fall exactly this way this night; finally, I can test my OBE vision. I go down on my hands and knees on the rug to measure how far beyond its corner the shadow extends. Using my right hand as a measuring stick, I find the shadow overlaps the rug by one hand's length on either side. The experience is not only visual; as I press my hand against the floor, I feel the grain of the wood against my palm. With this precious measurement in mind, I hurry back to the bedroom, arouse my body, and return corporeally to the living room to check the shadow. The room is black as soot. There is no moonlight or shadow. … I experiment but cannot bring the shadow back by either natural or artificial light. I conclude that the scene is a mixture of my memory of the room and my imagination of shadows on a moonlit night. I have been the victim of a hallucinatory hoax of my own making. ("My Search for the Soul," p. 55.)

During everyday life, the human brain manufactures both waking consciousness and the perception of a sensory reality using data from the outside world and the neural architecture of the inside world. It is not surprising that during sleep or anesthesia or injury, when both the body and the senses are shut down, this constructive faculty might sometimes be aroused, producing both a wak-

ing consciousness and the illusion of a sensory reality. I call these episodes waking-reality illusions (WRIs) instead of out-of-body experiences, since the OBE terminology implies for many a spirit phantom that leaves the body, a yet-to-be-accepted hypothesis.

Dr. Frederick Aardema is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Montreal Faculty of Medicine. He personally has had a large number of out-of-body experiences and has used his research skills to investigate the nature of his own episodes of waking-reality illusion. He gives several reasons for believing that out-of-body experiences are neuropsychological constructions rather than the externalization of a spirit phantom. (Frederick Aardema, *Explorations in Consciousness: A New Approach to Out-Of-Body Experiences* [Mount Royal, Quebec: Mount Royal Publishing, 2012], 70–79) (1.) The content of the OBE reality can reflect personal concerns. For example, a spiritual feeling can result in encountering a church in the OBE environment. A feeling of fear can manifest as a malevolent animal or human presence. (2.) Perceptions can be reminiscent of reality, but disconcertingly different. For example, walls may be out of place, furniture you expect to be there is absent, rooms may be in entirely different locations in the house. He interprets this as a failure in the process of constructing reality. The perceived world is unstable because without sensory input the constructive faculty has to rely on memory and imagination. Failure in construction is often accompanied by perceptual degradation – everything begins to look a little bleak and washed out. When this occurs, there is often a loss in the level of waking-consciousness lucidity and a drift into the dream state. (3.) Memory can be compromised. For example, you are walking in your neighborhood but can't remember what it is supposed to look like. Here waking-consciousness lucidity is degrading; waking consciousness is beginning to look more like dream consciousness. (4.) Total perceptual collapse can occur. The entire out-of-body environment suddenly disappears completely, leaving you in a black void or causing you to wake up.

All of these phenomena are difficult to understand from the point of view of a spirit phantom externalized from the physical body and, like a ghost, drifting over the real world. But if there is no spirit phantom, why do people see their physical body lying in bed during an OBE experience? Aardema points out that sometimes the physical body is not seen. "Saturday, June 24, 2006, 3:35 am … I took a quick glance back at the bed and noticed that there was no body lying in bed. … With that last observation, I … walked up to a bedroom window, and flew outside into the garden …" Another experience of his makes it clear that the perceived physical body is part of the waking-reality illusion.

> Tuesday, October 17, 2006, 2:40 am. [While lying in bed after transition to the OBE state] I looked down at my body. The light was dim, but I could clearly make out the outline of what I assumed was my physical body underneath the comforter, with my arms dropped on top. Without meeting any resistance, I lifted two phantom arms out of my physical body. I could clearly discern the outline of my two phantom arms, as well as my physical arms, lying immobile on top of the sheets. Except for the two phantom arms, there was nothing to indicate that the rest of me was not in the physical body. I woke up shortly after and began to analyze the entire experience. Then it suddenly hit me. I was no longer lying on my back as I had been earlier. I was lying on my side with my right arm firmly locked underneath my body. … I had been separating my phantom arms from a phantom body that *posed* as my physical body! (pp. 47–48)

Although reduced during the OBE experience, there is still sensory input from the physical body to the brain. This incoming data gets included in the waking-reality illusion. Proprioceptive data says there is a body in the bed, so the waking-reality illusion uses this data and produces the appearance of a physical body lying in

bed, even if sometimes it does not correspond to the exact position of the actual body.

Another question that needs to be answered is why the waking-reality illusion body behaves like a spirit phantom. One would expect a reconstruction of sensory reality to include all the restrictions of normal reality, but the OBE body is able to walk through walls and fly through the air, things that the physical body is not able to do. I can think of two answers to this question.

The first is expectation. If you have been reading books or listening to stories about out-of-body experiences, the psychologically constructed reality illusion will accommodate to your assumptions about behavior in the out-of-body state. Robert Peterson is a computer programmer living in Minnesota. He was fascinated with the idea of out-of-body travel and tried many methods to achieve it. Here is his first actual out-of-body experience:

> I had read a few OBE books by then. … I did a backward somersault over my head and out of my body. I felt free and weightless. I wanted to float slowly up to the ceiling. With that thought, I started to float gently up. Then I looked up and thought about my destination, the top of the ceiling. Suddenly, I whooshed up to the ceiling. I looked around the room with a sense of delight. I looked straight down at my body. It was under the bed covers, but from what I could see, it looked as if it had just collapsed and was out cold. I thought, "Gee, what if I fall from up here?" As soon as the thought crossed my mind, I came crashing down into my physical body and rejoined. (*Out of Body Experiences: How to Have Them and What to Expect* [Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 2013], 40–41)

You can see that from his previous reading he expects to be able to fly and his illusion easily accommodates this assumption. It is very responsive to his expectations and desires.

The second answer to the question of why the OBE body behaves like a spirit phantom has to do with the fact that the OBE state is close to other states of consciousness less rigid than the normal waking state. The subtle differences between daydreams, fantasies, guided imagery, dreams, lucid dreams, hypnogogic states, hallucinations, hypnotic trance hallucinations, shamanic sky journeys, psychedelic sessions, NDEs, and OBEs have yet to be worked out. We do know, though, that a large percentage of OBEs begin in the dream state, move to lucid dreaming, where a person is awake in the dream, and then become full scale out-of-body experiences. They can also occur as one is going down through the hypnogogic state into sleep. Flying dreams are common. A recent book on dreams by Jeremy Taylor is called *Where People Fly and Water Runs Uphill* (New York: Warner Books, 1992). Hypnogogic imagery, the imagery found halfway between waking and sleeping, frequently involves moving over a landscape looking down at features like forests and rooftops. The sense of flying, then, seems to be a human neuropsychological feature that shows itself in different altered states, such as dreams, lucid dreams, and hypnogogic imagery. It has been suggested that the sense of flying may be a result of the vestibular system, the system that maintains balance, trying to resolve conflicting information. On the one hand, the body is sending information that it is at rest. On the other hand, activity in the altered state is sending information that the body is up and moving. (Jayne Gackenbach and Jane Bosveld, *Control Your Dreams* [New York: Harper and Row, 1989], 47) Or it might go back to our arboreal monkey ancestors' ability to navigate in the treetops.

Near-death experiences, which often contain out-of-body episodes and trips to other worlds, can occur during clinical death, when the

brain is producing no measurable electrical activity. How can people later say that such an experience felt more real than ordinary reality, that they saw things going on around them, and that they had complex thoughts and feelings about what they saw, when the brain was in a totally quiescent electrical state? Sometimes what they say they saw is later verified to be what actually happened. When this occurs, it is called veridical perception. Altogether, these findings present a powerful case that consciousness and the brain are two different things. The brain may open a gateway for the influx of consciousness, but consciousness exists in its own right, separate from the human brain. During near-death experiences, when this consciousness leaves the body, it frequently travels to a paradise world and encounters a divine loving presence. I would very much like to be able to say that veridical perception in an out-of-body/near-death experience during electrical shutdown of the brain proves the existence of a separate consciousness that survives death, the existence of a heaven world, and the existence of God as the divine light of unconditional love. These are certainly my preferred outcomes. There are a number of problems with the argument, however.

The near-death experience may not be occurring during electrical quiescence. In the 1950s hypnotists discovered that it is possible to distort time. For example, ten minutes of clock time can be set to feel like an hour of subjective time. (Linn F. Cooper and Milton H. Erickson, *Time Distortion in Hypnosis: An Experimental and Clinical Investigation* [Carmarthen, UK: Crown House Publishing, 1959]) The life review is a familiar feature of some near-death experiences. An entire lifetime can be reviewed in a few moments. "My life flashed in front of my eyes." A near-death waking-reality illusion could be occurring in compressed time during the few seconds before the electrical shutdown of the brain or during the time after the brain begins to fire up again.

Consciousness may not reside in the normal electrical activity of neurons in the brain. It may reside, for example, in undetected activity in the glial cells. In an interview in *Scientific American* the neuroscientist Andrew Koob points out that 90 percent of the brain is made up of glial cells and 10 percent is made up of neurons. This is the source of the idea that we only use 10 percent of our brain, since glial cells were long thought to be inactive insulation for the neurons. Research beginning in the 1960s has shown, however, that one type of glial cell, the astrocyte, is anything but inactive. Astrocytes can communicate with each other in the cortex, can communicate with neurons, can release neurotransmitters, and can control blood flow to different regions in the brain. Each astrocyte has hundreds of end-feet that attach to neurons, blood vessels, and other astrocytes. Communication is by "calcium wave." A stimulated astrocyte releases calcium which flows through the end-feet to other astrocytes and to neurons. A calcium wave can spread through an area hundreds of times the size of the original astrocyte. It can also cause neurons to fire. Koob comments on the relation of astrocytes to human thought:

> In this theory, neurons are tied to our muscular action and external senses. We know astrocytes monitor neurons for this information. Similarly, they can induce neurons to fire. Therefore, astrocytes modulate neuron behavior. This could mean that calcium waves in astrocytes are our thinking mind. Neuronal activity without astrocyte processing is a simple reflex; anything more complicated might require astrocyte processing. The fact that humans have the most abundant and largest astrocytes of any animal and we are capable of creativity and imagination also lends credence to this speculation. … Basically, it is obvious that astrocytes are involved in brain processing in the cortex, but the main questions are, do our thoughts and imagination stem from astrocytes working together with neurons, or are our thoughts and imagination solely the domain of astrocytes? Maybe

> the role of neurons is to support astrocytes. ("The Root of Thought," October 27, 2009, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-root-of-thought-what/)

If the brain is still active at the glial level, even though normal electrical signaling of the neurons has been shut down, sensory input may still be reaching the brain structures responsible for the waking-reality illusion of the near-death experience. This could account for some of the seemingly miraculous veridical perceptions that occur in these experiences.

The mechanism involved in near-death experience during brain shutdown could be time distortion, it could be glial consciousness, it could be some other as yet unknown brain facility. But how do we explain the true perceptions that can occur in near-death states? These veridical perceptions can be explained by clairvoyance, precognition, and telepathy, the kind of paranormal abilities long researched by parapsychologists. For example, does remote viewing, the practice of imagining yourself in a remote location and being able to bring back true information about that location, imply anything about the existence of a soul that can separate from the body? No. A waking-reality illusion is simply a much more vivid form of imagination that fools conscious awareness into believing that it is perceiving true sensory input. The person believes that he is actually at the remote location in a phantom body.

When people think about parapsychological experiments, they usually think about guessing symbols on cards to see if probabilities are distorted by non-sensory information transfer. But psychic content can be much more complex and true to life. I knew a Berkeley student who told me that she was taking a music class there. The night before, she would dream the whole class, so that the next day she knew everything that was going to happen. She also told me that she had frequent out-of-body experiences. It is easy to dismiss individual

incidents like this as cases of self-delusion. When thousands of such incidents are collected in parapsychological research, the evidence becomes much harder to dismiss. Some individual cases are harder than others to wave away, too. My brother had a friend who had many psychic experiences. She called him on the phone one afternoon in his office and told him everything he had been doing for the last two hours. I know my brother isn't lying and he certainly isn't a chump, so you have to start imagining improbabilities like hidden cameras and hidden microphones to explain it away.

Are waking-reality illusions responsible for apparitions and religious visions? Dr. Greyson had 292 people who had undergone a near-death experience fill out Ralph Hood's Mysticism Scale. He found that two-thirds of the near-death experiences were also rated as mystical experiences. ("Congruence Between Near-Death and Mystical Experience," *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 24, no. 4 [2014]) The fact that a near-death experience is a waking-reality illusion that is frequently also a mystical experience shows that waking-reality illusions are very near in essence to religious visions. The phenomenological map of trance depth shows this clearly. Totally real trance hallucinations involving all the senses occur very near to the Unitive Level where feelings of oneness with everything, voidness, loss of identity, and a sense of infinite potential occur.

The Catholic Church divides visions into three kinds: corporeal, interior, and intellectual. A corporeal vision means that the vision is apprehended by one or more of the senses. An interior vision means that it is perceived in the mind's sensory imagination although the content has a spiritual source. An intellectual vision means that the content is perceived with a person's reason via hearing words or having realizations. A Spanish informant reported the following corporeal vision to church authorities in 1483: While praying on his knees in front of a chapel he heard the sobs and cries of a little girl inside. The locked doors of the chapel opened miraculously, and he saw a

beautiful young girl of seven or eight inside, who was wringing her hands and crying out for pity from Jesus Christ, beseeching him to have mercy on his people. When he asked her what was troubling her so, she charged him with a religious message to the men of the surrounding parishes. After she was finished, she disappeared, and the chapel doors miraculously closed and locked themselves again. (Dan Merkur, Gnosis: *An Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Unions* [Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993], 5–6) Could this be a waking-reality illusion? There is no hypnotic trance induction, no close brush with death, and no report of any out-of-body phenomena. We do know some things that indicate that it might be a waking-reality illusion, however. People in a somnambulistic trance can perform tasks where they look completely awake but are still deep in the trance state. A posthypnotic suggestion can establish a trigger event that will return a subject to the somnambulistic level immediately from the everyday waking state. It is possible to speculate, then, that some unknown trigger event propelled the informant down to the visionary trance level while he was praying in front of the chapel and that what he reported about the locked doors and the little girl proceeded as a hallucinatory waking-reality illusion, an illusion that seemed real because it was supported by data from the five senses.

Mystics and students of mysticism often write as if mystical states were trance plus some religious content. In this conception trance is like pure water and religion is like a set of vegetables that have been added to the boil to make the mystical soup. In this book what we have been seeing is that trance is already a mystical soup that gets more and more religious as you go deeper and deeper into the denser levels of the broth. At the bottom is the Unitive Level but above that, at the Visionary Trance level, we find near-death waking-reality illusions and corporeal religious visions.

Chapter 5
Measures of Hypnotic Susceptibility and Spiritual Experience

If trance is an integral part of spiritual experience, as I have been trying to show, then measures of hypnotic susceptibility – the ability to go into trance – should correlate with measures of spiritual experience. A number of research reports show that this is the case.

Don Gibbons and James De Jarnette, "Hypnotic Susceptibility and Religious Experience, *"Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion"* 11, no. 2 (June 972): 152–66

Twenty-six subjects scoring high on the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility were identified along with twenty-three subjects who scored low. The Harvard scale uses a light hypnotic induction along with the results of a series of twelve different, increasingly difficult suggestions to gauge susceptibility to hypnosis. The first suggestion is "head falling forward." The last suggestion is for temporary amnesia. One point is scored for the successful completion of each suggestion. The subjects were also asked, "What religious denomination do you prefer?" and "Have you ever been 'saved' or undergone a religious conversion experi-

ence?" The data for Protestants was analyzed. The "Saved" group contained significantly more subjects who were highly susceptible to hypnosis than the "Unsaved" group.

	High-susceptible	Low-susceptible
"Saved' Protestants	10	8
"Unsaved" Protestants	0	5

Interviews showed a marked difference between the high- and low-susceptible "Saved" Protestants. For the high-susceptibles their conversion was, without exception, a profound experiential event, characterized by alterations in perception and emotion. For the low-susceptibles, their conversion occurred for personal reasons in a far more rational way.

The high-susceptibles said things like, "I began to feel a warm tingling glow inside of me. The next thing I knew, I was down in front of the altar, and I was crying," or, "It was like the Hand of God came down and touched me. I felt so happy. I never felt joy like I felt it that day."

The low-susceptibles said things like, "I had been going to that church for about six months, mainly because my girlfriend went there, but I never 'went forward.' Then one day the preacher asked all those who had accepted the Lord to put up our hands, and we both put our hands up and that was it."

The authors suggest that conversion and salvation experiences, along with transcendental, mystical, and deeply emotional spiritual experiences, may be hypnotic phenomena that occur without a formal hypnotic induction. Instead, they occur through implicit or explicit suggestion conveyed by the speaker, the situation, or the ceremony being performed. If this is so, they may be limited to the minority of the population that is capable of deep trance. The authors believe

that the conscious use of suggestion to produce mystical-type experiences which foster personal growth and personality integration should be explored in further research.

Ralph Hood, "Hypnotic Susceptibility and Reported Religious Experience," *Psychological Reports* 33, no. 2 (1973): 549–50

Eighty-one subjects completed two psychological tests, one for religious experience and the other for hypnotic susceptibility. Hood's Religious Experience Episodes Measure provides fifteen brief descriptions of religious experience in booklet form. The subject rates each of the descriptions for the extent of similarity to his or her own personal experience. The Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility we have already seen above. The correlation between the two scales was .36 ($p < .01$). Hypnotic susceptibility accounts for approximately 13 percent of the religious experience score variance.

Eugene W. Mathes, "Mystical Experiences, Romantic Love, and Hypnotic Susceptibility," *Psychological Reports* 50, no. 3 (June 1, 1982): 701–2

The author states, "Measures of mystical experience, romantic love, and hypnotic susceptibility were positively intercorrelated suggesting that they all involve the ability to suspend contact with objective reality."

Subjects were fifty-five men and seventy women, each a college student who was dating someone at the time. The tests used were the Peak Experience Scale, based on Abraham Maslow's description of peak experiences; Rubin's Romantic Love Scale, which measures commitment to the beloved; a Romantic Love Symptom Checklist, which lists seventy-six feelings related to romantic love; and Tellegen and Atkinson's Absorption Scale, which is correlated with hypnotic susceptibility. The significant correlations reported were:

Romantic Love Symptom Checklist and Romantic Love Scale

Men Peak Experience Scale	.45	Romantic Love Symptom Checklist
Women Peak Experience Scale	.36	Romantic Love Symptom Checklist
Men Absorption Scale	.28	Romantic Love Symptom Checklist
Women Absorption Scale	.23	Romantic Love Symptom Checklist
Men Absorption Scale	.30	Romantic Love Scale
Women Absorption Scale	.17	Romantic Love Scale

Unfortunately, correlations between the Peak Experience Scale and the Absorption Scale were not included, making the author's statement about the positive intercorrelation of measures of mystical (peak) experience, romantic love, and hypnotic susceptibility an overstatement for our purposes.

Nicholas P. Spanos and Patricia Moretti, "Correlates of Mystical and Diabolical Experiences in a Sample of Female University Students," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 27, no. 1 (March 1988): 105–16

A sample of 124 female university students was administered a battery of psychological tests. The ones relevant to our inquiry are:

Tellegen and Atkinson's Absorption Scale. It measures the extent that a person can become so absorbed in an imaginative counterfactual experience that it seems real. It has some correlation with hypnotizability, although there is debate about this correlation among researchers.

The Carleton University Responsiveness to Suggestion Scale (CURSS). A seven-item test that results in two scales, one based on behaviors

produced by test suggestions and the other based on an individual's subjective sense of how well s/he responded to test suggestions.

Field's Hypnotic Depth Inventory. Thirty-eight items that assess subjective experiences associated with hypnosis (e.g., "Things seemed unreal").

The Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, Form C. A twelve-point scale that scores behavioral responses to test suggestions.

Hood's Mysticism Scale. A thirty-two-item questionnaire used to identify the tendency to have mystical experiences.

The Anomalous Experience Scale. It asks three primary questions. (1.) Have you ever had the experience of leaving your body? That is, have you ever experienced yourself as actually being outside of your physical body? (2.) Have you ever actually heard the voice of a spiritual presence? (3.) Have you ever actually seen a spiritual being? If any of these questions are answered with a "yes," there are further questions about age, content of the experience, and the type of spiritual presence, whether holy, evil, or neither.

Correlations of Hood's Mysticism Scale with measures of hypnotic susceptibility are all significant at the $p < .01$ level:

	Mysticism
Carleton U Suggestion Scale - objective	.36
Carleton U Suggestion Scale – subjective	.36
Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale	.39
Field's Hypnotic Depth Inventory	.37
Absorption	.53

A multiple regression analysis with mysticism as the criterion

variable was conducted with the five hypnotic susceptibility scales and two other psychodynamic scales as predictors. Absorption was the best predictor, accounting for 29 percent of the variance in mysticism scores. The Hypnotic Depth Inventory added another 5 percent in predictability. None of the other scores added significantly to predictability.

The Anomalous Experience Scale was divided into three groups: those who reported out-of-body experience (N=30), those who reported visions/voices (N=14), and those who reported no anomalous experience (N=87).

Subjects who reported out-of-body experience obtained scores significantly higher than the no-report subjects on all of the measures of hypnotic susceptibility except Absorption. Out-of-body reporting was not related to mysticism, either. An interesting problem for the future will be to find out what aspects of hypnotic susceptibility out-of-body reporting does relate to, since absorption and mysticism are excluded.

Subjects who reported visions/voices also obtained scores significantly higher than the no-report subjects on all of the measures of hypnotic susceptibility except Absorption.

This paper contains some other very interesting material: Hood's Mysticism Scale does not correlate with measures of psychopathology. The authors suggest that this is the case because Hood built his scale on descriptions of emotionally positive mystical experience. They have built a scale similar to Hood's based on negative emotional experience called the Diabolical Experiences Scale. It has items such as, "On occasion, I have felt as though an evil spirit was tempting me." "I have had an experience in which an evil presence seemed to absorb and take hold of me." It correlates with positive mysticism and with measures of neuroticism and psychosomatic complaints.

P. J. Adams, "Language, Mysticism, and Hypnotizability: A Brief Communication," *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* 56, no. 1 (January 2008): 73–82

The author writes, "Eighty-one participants completed the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form A and the Hood Mysticism Scale. Participants were divided into 3 equal groups based on 'high,' 'ambiguous,' and 'low' mysticism scale scores. The high group scored significantly higher on hypnotizability compared to the low group."

Steven Jay Lynn and James Evans, "Hypnotic Suggestion Produces Mystical-Type Experiences in the Laboratory: A Demonstration Proof," *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice* 4, no. 1 (March 2017): 23–37

This is a very exciting study because it actually uses hypnosis to produce a mystical experience in the lab and relates it to measures of hypnotizability and mystical experience. A total of 113 undergraduates took the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility. After the hypnotic induction and the twelve test suggestions, but before the termination of the trance, they were given suggestions for a mystical experience. Here is an excerpt from these suggestions:

> Feel yourself part of a larger whole, a way of enriching your sense of being, your sense of awareness, your sense of connection, your sense of meaning in the beauty of the moment, the beauty of a sunset, the beauty of a moonrise, the rhythm of the waves, of the tides, the rhythm of your breath, the rhythm of the world spinning on its axis and moving around the sun, every day, every month, every year, time moving from the past to the present to the future, seamlessly into eternity, and you are a part of

> it all, a part of something so special, so mysterious, so awesome, so amazing, and you are increasingly aware of just how amazing and special your life is, each moment of your life, and you gain a special sense of merging in a safe way with a larger whole, a greater sense of being, a greater capacity to love and feel empathy for all living things that are a part of this amazing world, a sense of all this that goes beyond words and may be difficult to even describe, you can experience this if you let this all happen.

Afterwards subjects rated the degree to which they had had a mystical experience: 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *to a slight degree*, 2 = *to a moderate degree*, 3 = *to a great degree*. They also did several other tests and filled out the Mystical Experiences Questionnaire (MEQ30). The Mystical Experiences Questionnaire has been used in research to identify mystical qualities produced by psychedelic drugs. It contains items like "experience of timelessness" and "feelings of peace and tranquility." The MEQ30 was altered somewhat so that instead of general questions it specifically asked about the hypnotically induced mystical experience.

Nine percent of participants reported having had a mystical-type experience to a "great degree" and 26 percent reported that they had had a mystical-type experience to a "moderate degree." This single question rating of the degree of mystical experience correlated r = .63 with the Mystical Experiences Questionnaire. It also correlated r = .29 with the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility. The Mystical Experience Questionnaire itself correlated r = .37 with the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility.

There is a great deal more in this paper. Only a small sketch is presented here.

The authors write, "Our findings represent a demonstration proof that hypnotic suggestion can play a viable role in inducing mystical-type experiences of varying degrees among about a third of participants in a laboratory context and support the hypothesis that the ability to experience hypnotically induced mystical-type experiences varies as a function of hypnotic suggestibility."

Tentative Conclusions

Measures of hypnotic susceptibility explain anywhere from 13 percent (Hood) to 34 percent (Spanos and Moretti) of the variability in measures of mystical/spiritual experience. Trance capability is an integral part of mystical/spiritual experience. Hypnotically produced mystical experiences can be used in the laboratory for research. About a third of people can experience a hypnotically produced mystical experience.

Research needs to be done to understand the differences between spontaneous mystical experiences, psychedelic mystical experiences, and hypnotically produced mystical experiences. If we can understand the differences, we might be able to improve our ability to intentionally produce these experiences. We also might be able to improve their quality.

If a third of people can experience a hypnotically produced mystical/spiritual experience, then there is a huge opportunity available to increase the amount of joy, love, and meaningfulness of life for people everywhere. Happiness is transmittable. Increase it for one-third of the population and it will rise for the other two-thirds

PART TWO

Trance Methods for Producing Spiritual Experience

Chapter 6
Don Gibbons – Mystical Therapy

Editor: Using techniques of suggestion Dr. Gibbons has long been inducing mystical experiences in clients who desire them and are sufficiently responsive. These experiences have proved extremely valuable in treating psychological problems.

Dr. Gibbons is a clinical psychologist who received his training at the Claremont Graduate University. He has taught at the University of Portland, the University of West Georgia, and DeSales University, where he was chairman of the Psychology Department. He has written five books, has published in scholarly journals, and has presented at the American Psychological Association and the British Royal Society of Medicine. He is the senior author of the chapter on hypnotic induction procedures in the *Handbook of Clinical Hypnosis*, published by the American Psychological Association in 2010.

Dr. Gibbons has invented a method similar to hypnosis called hyperemperia that uses suggestions to induce more and more lucid states of awareness, instead of suggestions that a subject go down into a deeper and deeper relaxation trance. A hyperempiric induction is based on suggestions of enhanced alertness and mind expansion, bringing one to an increased clarity of awareness. Research has shown that it is equally as effective as relaxation trance.

Dr. Gibbons has also invented a multimodal method for delivering suggestions, so that different aspects of the whole person are addressed. This is the Best Me technique. Each initial letter in "Best Me" summarizes a type of suggestion.

Belief systems which orient an individual to person, place, time, and events may be suggested as being different, allowing the participant to mentally transcend present realities.

Emotions may be enriched, intensified, weakened, or combined with others.

Sensations and physical perceptions may be suggested and experienced with an intensity approaching those of real events.

Thoughts and images may be created and guided in response to explicit or indirect suggestions.

Motives may either be suggested directly or implied as a consequence of other events.

Expectations may be structured concerning the manner in which the participant will look forward to events which will occur in the future, and the manner in which suggested experiences will subsequently be recalled and interpreted in memory.

Following is Don Gibbons' article, "Mystical Therapy," from *The Journal of Experiential Trance* 1, no. 1 (2009): 1–10. Dr. Gibbon has made some small changes and I have edited lightly.

Dr. Gibbons – Mystical Therapy

This paper describes the induction of a series of suggestion-induced mystical experiences to reverse an ongoing depression and anhedonia, or the loss of the capacity to experience pleasure, and to re-institute a drive for high achievement. For the purposes of this paper, a mystical experience may be defined as one which possesses a quality and an intensity which are not voluntarily attainable in everyday life.

I like to express my suggestions using what I refer to as the Best Me Technique. Using the foregoing definition, the Best Me Technique is a form of hyperempiria which involved your whole person in a suggested event. Every letter in "Best Me" corresponds with an element of suggestion, and these elements can be applied in a variety of ways: to place yourself or another person into hypnosis, to pre-experience the accomplishment of a goal, and to reinforce suggestions at the conclusion of a hypnosis or self-hypnosis session. It's the versatility and the thoroughness of these elements that makes the Best Me Technique distinct from meditation and visualization exercises, and from other forms of hypnosis and self-hypnosis. Instead of merely picturing something in the mind's eye, the Best Me Technique enables us to paint upon the canvas of experience almost any masterpiece we may desire (Gibbons, 1995, 2001, 2003; Gibbons & Lynn, in press).

The **Best Me** Technique uses **B**elief systems (who and where you are and what is going on around you), **E**motions, **S**ensations and physical perceptions, **T**houghts and images, **M**otives, and **E**xpectations. Best Me suggestions may be presented in any order and repeated as often as necessary, with considerable repetition and elaboration as needed to accomplish the desired effect. Best Me suggestions may be presented in any order and repeated as often as necessary, much as one might repeat the verses and choruses of

a song. The Best Me categories are not conceptually "pure," and each Best Me suggestion may contain elements of the others.

Using the Best Me Technique, mystical experiences may easily be made available to clients who desire them and are sufficiently responsive to suggestion. Such experiences should be determined by the needs and expressed preferences of the client, with the goal of providing reassurance, strength, and encouragement. It should be of little consequence whether the religious and/or metaphysical beliefs of the client are shared by the therapist or are in conflict with those of the therapist, or whether the therapist has no theological or metaphysical beliefs at all (Gibbons & Schreiber, 2004).

THE CASE OF JENNIFER

"Jennifer" was a forty-five-year-old, married, former operating room technician with two grown children, who was currently drawing workmen's compensation payments for an injury sustained at work when she single-handedly attempted to support an operating room table which collapsed during the course of an operation. In response to the question on her application form asking why she was seeking therapy, Jennifer wrote, "I feel lost and useless." She had lost interest in sexual relations with her second husband, to whom she was recently married, and she had ceased to look for work. She usually spent her days sitting at home watching soap operas.

She was raised in a Chicago tenement, and both of her parents, who taught in a local Catholic school, were alcoholics who fought regularly with each other, and who frequently would beat her with chains cut from a children's swing. In order not to alarm the neighbors, she had to force herself to remain silent during these beatings. If she did cry out any with noise her parents would only beat her more intensely until she learned to endure her punishments in silence.

At the age of seven, Jennifer was raped by three men who knocked at the door of her apartment stating that they were there to deliver a television set. So great was her fear of her parents' beatings that she did not tell them or anyone else about the rapes, because she believed that she would be accused of having provoked them since she had not taken off the skirt of her Catholic school uniform and put on slacks instead.

As she was growing up, her older sisters would occasionally set her up by placing a pack of her parents' cigarettes in one of her clothing drawers, and then tell on her. Unless she "told the truth" and admitted that she had stolen the cigarettes, her parents would beat her even more severely for "lying." She married as soon as she could in order to get away from home, vowing that she would never be beaten again. Her first husband, with whom she had two children, was an extremely jealous and possessive man who watched her every move and insisted on being waited on hand and foot.

Shortly after her two children had left home, her husband bit her lip as they were making up during one of their numerous quarrels. As she looked at herself in the bathroom mirror, all of the trauma of her childhood rape came flooding back, and this put an end to her first marriage.

Jennifer's two "signature strengths" which had kept her going were her closeness to her children and the pride which she took in her work. When she presented at my office, with a lifelong history of depression which had recently worsened with the loss of these two signature strengths, she clearly needed to change the manner in which she thought and felt about herself, the world, and the future (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). But, like many real-life clients, she was probably too depressed to become sufficiently involved with the slow, painstaking "homework assignments" of cognitive therapy. Instead, she needed an epiphany – an experience of mystical intensity, which

would fill her with enthusiasm for life, restore her desire to work, and re-awaken her passionate relationship with her new husband.

I chose to employ a traditional hypnotic induction rather than a hyperempiric one, because I suspected that Jennifer would have learned to be extremely good at dissociation due to her early childhood conditioning. (Recall that since hyperempiria means "enhanced experience," you can get to hyperempiria with any induction procedure if it is intense enough!) Since hyperempiria literally refers to a state of "enhanced experience," high responders are often able to perform quite well by first going "down" into hypnosis and then "up" into hyperempiria, much as one might first draw back a slingshot in order to increase its forward momentum, feeling alternately shut down and hypersensitive in turn.

She responded extremely well to the induction and was totally amnesic for the experience. With her prior knowledge and consent, I used suggestions similar to the following, pulling out all the stops to induce the required levels of ecstasy to re-orient her approach to life and to re-awaken her emotional responsiveness.

Belief systems. Now we are reaching down farther than ever before into your vast, untapped potential for feeling happiness, ecstasy, and desire, in many different ways and on many different levels, as I continue to guide you ever farther into these blissful depths of delight. You love being in hypnosis. And each time that you return to these blissful depths, you discover greater and greater depths of happiness, fulfillment, and joy beyond anything you have ever dreamed of, hoped for, longed for, or desired.

Motives. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the more beautiful the experience becomes. And the more you feel, the more you are able to feel. And the more you feel, the more you want to feel,

and the more beautiful the experience becomes. Sinking down, and shutting down, and sinking down, and shutting down. Sinking down and shutting down. Shutting down completely. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the more beautiful the experience becomes.

Emotions. Great waves of happiness, joy, and every wonderful, positive emotion are flowing out from the innermost depths of your being like water from a hundred secret springs.

Motives. And the more you feel, the more you are able to feel. And the more you feel, the more you want to feel, and the more beautiful the experience becomes. Sinking down, and shutting down, and sinking down, and shutting down. Sinking down and shutting down. Shutting down completely. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the more beautiful the experience becomes.

Sensations and physical perceptions. As your consciousness remains totally shut down, your entire being is becoming exquisitely more sensitive and more responsive than it could possibly be in any other state. As we continue reaching ever farther into your vast, untapped potential for feeling happiness and joy, for your exquisitely tuned body to savor and experience to the fullest – flowing into every muscle, and every fiber, and every cell of your body, driving out all of the worry, and all of the tension, and all of the care that you have ever felt, and bathing you from head to toe in wave after wave of infinite, boundless peace and happiness, and joy beyond your wildest dreams.

Motives. And the more you feel, the more you are able to feel. And the more you feel, the more you want to feel, and the more beautiful the experience becomes.

Thoughts and images. Now, you are going to pre-experience in concentrated form the joy and satisfaction that will be yours in response to a job well done. As your consciousness remains completely shut down, you are being transported to greater heights of ecstasy than you have ever dreamed of, hoped for, longed for, or imagined. The happiness that your body is able to feel is continuing to grow, doubling and re-doubling in strength and intensity until you wouldn't be able to bear even a fraction of it if you weren't in deep hypnosis. But there is no limit to the joy, fulfillment, and ecstasy which you can reach in these blissful depths of trance.

Motives. And the more you feel, the more you are able to feel. And the more you feel, the more you want to feel, and the more beautiful the experience becomes. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the more beautiful the experience becomes.

Thoughts and images. It's as if all of the joy, and all of the happiness, and all of the ecstasy, and all of the delight that have ever been felt by all of the people who ever walked the face of the Earth, put together, are yours to enjoy now, in these golden moments. And if you lived a thousand lifetimes, you would not be able to experience a fraction of the ecstasy, the joy, and the infinite, unbounded joy that is yours to experience now, in these golden moments of delight. As the intensity continues to grow, your entire being is dissolving into a wave of ecstasy beyond the limitations of space and time. You have become a wave of sheer, unbounded ecstasy – infinite, beyond infinity, and eternal beyond all measure of eternity.

Emotions. There is no limit to the happiness and joy that you are able to feel in hypnosis. And now it's going to continue growing by itself, becoming stronger and more intense, until your entire being is so blissfully happy that it is beyond the power of words to describe.

Expectations. And as a result of these hypnotic experiences, your entire outlook on life will be different, and each new day will be a thing of wondrous beauty.

As we were nearing the end point of the suggestions, Jennifer's body began to twitch and to convulse in obvious ecstasy, and as she appeared to be nearing the point of orgasm I would gently suggest, "Now, your body is beginning to relax once more," and she automatically complied. If she had experienced an actual climax during the session, this knowledge might eventually emerge into her consciousness and disrupt the therapeutic relationship. As it was, anticipation and arousal level which was created by the suggestions as they were currently worded would be expected not only to restore her zest for living, but to re-energize both her libido and her enthusiasm for work. At the conclusion of each session, the intensity of her emotion was returned to normal, post-hypnotic suggestions for relaxation and clear-headedness were provided, and the session was concluded in the usual manner.

Results

At the end of the first session, which lasted approximately thirty minutes, Jennifer became momentarily tearful, explaining that it was such a relief to have someone to talk to about her problems with her neighbors and her extended family, since her husband was not interested in these details. For the remainder of the first session and the remaining sessions, we would devote half of each session to hypnosis, and half to a discussion of these topics.

Her manner immediately brightened; and as she arrived for the third session, she announced that she had resumed sexual relations with her husband. "Let's do that again!" she quoted him as having said to her the previous Saturday.

At about the fifth session, Jennifer told me that she had begun looking for work. She also stated that her managed care insurance company had requested a review of her case, which is customarily for workers in her State who are drawing disability for on-the-job injuries. The insurance company review took place at the conclusion of Jennifer's eighth session. The reviewer noted in his report that she was wearing jewelry and did not appear to be outwardly depressed. Jennifer was amnesic for the specific content of the suggestions she was given under hypnosis, and the reviewer – apparently not wishing to be criticized for being one of the reactionaries who still do not believe in hypnosis – made no reference to the treatment itself. Instead, he focused on our discussions of Jennifer's daily problems during the second half of our sessions, pronounced them "specious," concluded that she was not depressed, and allowed four more sessions for termination.

Soon afterwards, Jennifer told me that she had found a job, at a specialized school which was teaching the very operating room skill for which she was disabled. At the first interview, she was asked if she would mind taking over the program and administering it. The current supervisor, apparently, was in some political difficulty, and Jennifer was being groomed from the start to become his successor, which occurred within a matter of about a month.

Jennifer was seen for a total of twelve sessions, as provided by her workmen's compensation insurance. I called her home one Sunday, three months after the conclusion of the twelfth session, in order to ask Jennifer how she was doing. Her husband answered and said that she had gone in to work that day, to finish cleaning up the paperwork mess left by her predecessor. I then called her at the work number which he gave me, and she reported that she was indeed doing well.

I contacted her for a second follow-up one year after her treatment had been concluded. She reported that she was still experiencing pain from her shoulder injury, and that political problems had developed on her job, and she was currently busy with wedding preparations for her second daughter. But when I specifically asked her about the comment that she had made in her intake application, she replied emphatically with a laugh that she no longer feels "lost and useless!"

Discussion

If other therapists encounter similar results with clients who are highly responsive to suggestion, it will no longer be possible to regard mystical experiences as beyond the range of voluntary human control. Instead of having to wait years or decades for experiences of this type to occur spontaneously, if indeed they happen at all. The versatility and power of the Best Me Technique should enable clients who respond well to suggestion to undergo mystical experiences as often as needed, anchoring the intensity of the emotion thus produced to suit the client's needs – in the present instance, to an appreciation of the beauty of each new day, and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Throughout the course of human history, a few individuals have been able to have experiences of mystical intensity, which are perceived as having the potential to permanently alter the lives of those who are fortunate enough to undergo them. The fact that these experiences are now voluntarily available to a wider number of people does not detract from their mystical, life-transforming potential.

I incorporated the words "as if" into my suggestions because I regard hyperempiria as a form of experiential theater. The subjective experiences which result from "as-if" suggestions are every bit as real as if they *are* really happening.

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More recent books by Dr. Gibbons:

Don E. Gibbons and Lanny Cavallaro. *Exploring Alternate Universes: And Learning What They CanTeach Us*. Amazon, 2013. Kindle.

Woods, Kelley T., and Don E. Gibbons. *Virtual Reality Hypnosis: Adventures in the Multiverse*, 2017. CreateSpace, Paperback and Amazon Kindle.

Editor: This is an article from Dr. Gibbons' blog (http://hyperempiria.blogspot.com/). An earlier version appeared in Hypnos 31, no. 2 (2004): 89-93, under the title, "Multimodal Suggestion for Facilitating Meditation and Prayer."

Mulltimodal Suggestion for Facilitating Meditation and Prayer

Considering the variety of suggestions which may be accepted by sufficiently responsive individuals (Shor & Orne, 1962), it may be hypothesized that suggestions will be actualized more easily if they are formulated in such a manner as to systematically and comprehensively involve several different modes of experience. The Best Me Technique utilizes the simultaneous involvement of Beliefs, Emotions, Sensations and physical perceptions, Thoughts and images, Motives, and Expectations, for greater involvement and effectiveness. Taken together, the elements of this technique form the acronym, BEST ME.

Hyperempiric suggestions may be administered in any order, each of the aforementioned categories may be employed as often as necessary, and each step in the procedure may incorporate elements of the others. In the latter case, the label applied to each step refers to the dimension of experience which is being given the greatest emphasis. For ease of illustration, the suggestions contained in this article have been provided in the B-E-S-T-M-E order. In actual use, hyperempiric suggestions may be administered in any order and repeated as often as necessary, with modifications which contribute to the total effect, much as one might repeat the verses and choruses of a song.

Mystical and Transcendental Experience Mediated by Suggestion

People of many different religious traditions have attested to the life changing potential of mystical and transcendental experi-

ences involving contact with a consciousness beyond one's own. In one study of the Fundamentalist Christian experience of salvation, for example, subjects readily attested to both the personal reality of the experience and its subsequent influence upon their lives, although such experiences did not seem to be universally attainable and did appear to be related to the ability to respond to suggestion (Gibbons & DeJarnette, 1972; Gibbons, 1988).

Many clients approach life from a primarily religious point of view. Such believers – particularly those who are elderly, infirm, or who have experienced a number of personal tragedies – may experience a "dark night of the soul" (Peers, 1990) as they struggle to deal with the stresses of life without access to sources of experiential spiritual support for their beliefs. However, Glasner (1955) refers to several purported uses of suggestion and hypnosis in Scripture to encourage and inspire the faithful, concluding, "Although it is impossible to state with any definiteness that hypnosis is referred to in the Bible (Old and New Testaments) and in the Talmud, there would seem to be considerable evidence that the authors of these works were indeed familiar with phenomena which we today should call hypnotic or which we should explain in terms of suggestion" (p. 39).

From the standpoint of the therapist who is well-versed in the techniques of hypnosis, experiences of this type may easily be made available to clients who desire them and are sufficiently responsive to suggestion. Such experiences should be determined by the needs and expressed preferences of the client, with the goal of providing reassurance, strength, and encouragement. It should be of little consequence whether the religious and metaphysical beliefs of the client are shared by the therapist or are in conflict with those of the therapist, or whether the therapist has no theological or metaphysical beliefs at all.

The following BMT suggestions for facilitating meditation and prayer describe a visit to a cathedral. They are not intended to be used as a script, but rather as an illustration of how the Best Me Technique may be used as a template for constructing multimodal suggestions for a variety of similar purposes. They may easily be modified to refer to a visit to a temple, a mosque, an ashram, a shrine, or any site or event which the client may find personally meaningful.

Because of the nature of the experiences to be undergone, an expressly hyperempiric induction, based upon specific suggestions of increased awareness and responsiveness (Gibbons, 1975), may be preferable to a more traditional hypnotic induction based upon expressed or implied suggestions of diminished awareness (Bányai & Hilgard, 1976; Gibbons, 1976), although either type of induction may be presented using a multimodal or Best Me format to facilitate involvement with the experiences which follow.

After the therapist has become sufficiently aware of the client's needs and preferences through preliminary discussion, and the client understands and fully consents to the experiences in which he or she is about to participate, suggestions may be given in the following manner.

Belief systems. Now, you can gradually become aware of yourself standing in front of a pair of large wooden doors, which are the doors of a great cathedral. If you accept each detail of the scene as I describe it, without trying to think critically, your imagination can be free to allow you to experience the situation just as if you were really there. So just let yourself stand there a moment, gazing at the carved wooden doors, as you prepare to enter. [*Brief pause*.]

Now, as the doors swing open, you first traverse a small area paved with stone, stopping at the font if you desire, and pause before a second pair of doors which leads inside.

Emotions. You can feel a surge of happiness and anticipation as you pass through a second pair of doors and into the dimly lit interior. As your eyes gradually become accustomed to the dimmer light from the stained glass windows, take a moment to look around in wonder at the magnificence of all you see.

Sensations and perceptions. Let yourself breathe slowly and deeply, as you inhale the faint aroma of incense, and listen to the gentle tones of music floating upon the quiet air.

Some distance away from you stands the High Altar, bordered by banks of gently glowing candles. You select a pew and, after pausing to genuflect if you wish, you enter the pew and take your seat or kneel once more.

Thoughts and images. Let your mind flow with the experience, and allow it to fill you to the very core of your being, until you feel as if you are able to hold within your own consciousness an awareness of the entire Universe, and all its beauty. As it does, you can feel yourself gradually becoming aware of the presence of a Consciousness other than your own.

As this Consciousness begins to merge with yours, you can feel the power of an infinite healing energy filling and flooding every muscle, and every fiber, and every nerve of your entire body. And it's as if all of the worry, and all of the tension, and all of the care that you have ever felt is being driven out, and replaced by the power of this infinite, unbounded, healing love.

As your own consciousness merges ever more completely with this Infinite Awareness, you feel as if you are able to hold within your own mind an awareness of the entire Universe, and all its beauty – infinite, beyond infinity, and eternal beyond all measure of eternity. And in this sense of total oneness, you are able to freely communicate all your deepest thoughts and needs.

Motives. The experience, as it continues, is providing you with all that you had hoped to obtain from it. The serenity and the peace which you find here will remain with you, as a source of deep inner strength which will enable you to cope much more effectively with all of life's problems.

Expectations. You will treasure the memory of this experience as it meets your needs in the future; and each time you return, you will be able to derive new benefits which will meet your needs even more effectively.

At the conclusion of the experience, the client may be re oriented to the present and the induction terminated in the usual manner.

Discussion

Although most of us routinely provide a considerable amount of detail with the experiences we suggest in order to make them more realistic, the Best Me Technique of hyperempiric suggestion provides a systematic framework for incorporating sufficient detail into several major types of experience in order to make sure that the suggested experiences are sufficiently comprehensive for maximum effectiveness.

Suggestion has previously been found to facilitate the Fundamentalist experience of "salvation" (Gibbons & DeJarnette, 1972). Similar types of "believed-in imaginings" (Sarbin, 1998) may be involved in hyp-

notically induced experiences of reincarnation, pre-incarnation, and co-incarnation, which, like religious sacraments, as well as hypnosis itself, may be conceptualized as a form of *experiential* hypnosis.

Lawrence (M. A. Lawrence, personal communication, June 27, 2003) reports the successful application of the Best Me Technique with nursing home residents who are dealing with end-of-life issues.

For additional instruction on meditation techniques, the Web site, Psychology Tools, contains a number of free downloadable audio files for meditation and stress management, as well as a host of other resources for therapists and clients.

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Editor: This is chapter seven from Don E. Gibbons and Lanny Cavallaro *Exploring Alternate Universes: And Learning What They Can Teach Us*. Amazon, 2013. Kindle. It is a complete script for a mystical experience. After the script Dr. Gibbons presents three cases of patients who have benefited greatly from the induced mystical states.

Exploring an Alternate Universe

We have gone to Heaven, we have
been the friends of the angels.
And now we will go back there,
for there is our country.
We are higher than Heaven, more
noble than the angels:
Why not go beyond them? Our goal
is the Supreme Majesty.
–Rumi, Seventeenth-Century Mystical Poet

In this chapter, we shall present an actual induction script that uses the multimodal BEST ME technique to transport the listener to an "alternate" Universe. Readers should familiarize themselves with the technique, but certainly not worry about memorizing it or even concern themselves about following it too religiously. Thereafter, we present several case histories that demonstrate how valuable this "laterosis" – this travel into an alternate Universe – has actually proven for clients.

* * *

Instead of celebrating each day as a precious gift, all too often we eke out our daily lives filled with worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear, and despair, scarcely pausing for food and rest. If we are fortunate, we are able to nurture one another by a hug, a warm glance, a few words of encouragement, and the strength of loving relationships. However, during critical times of stress or personal challenge, even these defenses can be easily overwhelmed.

If the number of possible alternate Universes is theoretically unlimited, as many physicists now believe, and if the number of ways in which we can experience a suggested change in conscious awareness is also unlimited, then it is possible to design hypnotic visits to an alternate Universe in such a way as to maximize opportunities for personal growth. This exercise in multimodal hyperempiria, or suggestion-enhanced experience, allows us to experience the kind of supreme majesty of existence that was referred to by Rumi many centuries ago. Regular visits to the alternate Universe we are about to explore together can change your outlook on life, strengthen the will to achieve, build self-esteem, and alleviate the effects of daily stress. Using this program on a daily basis, much as you might practice an exercise in meditation, can nourish and sustain you in many different ways, and on many different levels, and turn each day into a thing of wondrous beauty.

Regular practice is just as important as it is in physical exercise or in various forms of meditation if the desired level of proficiency is to be attained. We have therefore designed the laterosis experience ("travel" to parallel Universes) as one that is enjoyable in itself, and one which people will frequently want to repeat.

It is not uncommon for participants to say something like, "I didn't want it to end," or, "I wish I could just stay there." When this occurs, we simply remind them that multimodal hyperempiria is an exercise for the imagination. Just as they don't want a good movie

to end, but they know that it has to, this is also true with multimodal hyperempiria. In the unlikely event that a participant should manifest any signs of distress during an exercise in multimodal hyperempiria, we smoothly terminate the proceeding and ask what might be the source of the difficulty before deciding whether or not to proceed. It is important for both participant and guide to keep in mind that since laterosis is an exercise for the imagination, anything that can be imagined can be unimagined just as easily.

Induction

The following suggestions were developed over several years. Their development may be traced in the foregoing three chapters, from the identification of a new, experientially based paradigm for hypnosis and suggestion-related phenomena, to the introduction of multimodal suggestion to facilitate the entire being in the content of a suggested event, to the development of multimodal hyperempiric suggestions, culminating in the induction which is to follow. These suggestions, however, should be regarded more as a template than as a script. They are not intended to be followed word for word, but rather to provide a pattern that can be adjusted to fit the personality and unique characteristics of each individual and the particular setting in which they are used.

After the foregoing variables have been properly taken into account, the suggestions may be presented. They should be given in a soothing, "hypnotic" voice, and repeated in varying order, much as you might vary the phrases and choruses of a song. As you become more familiar with their content, you will be able to apply them with greater flexibility, eventually disposing with a written model altogether.

If desired, a hyperempiric induction can be used in place of the deepening with the clock imagery, in order to carry the participants down into hypnosis and then up into hyperempiria, before proceed-

ing further. For those who desire to operate exclusively within a hyper-alert state, the hyperempiric procedure may be used in place of both the induction and deepening.

* * *

Just imagine that it's a nice, spring day … and that you're lying on a soft woolen blanket, on a sandy beach, by the side of the ocean. If you accept each detail of the situation as I describe it, without trying to think critically, your imagination will be free to allow you to experience the situation, just as if you were really there.

I'm going to count from one to ten, and by the time I get to the count of ten, you'll be resting comfortably in a deep, sound state of hypnosis. So just relax, and listen to my voice as I begin the count from one to ten.

One. You can feel the warm sand beneath the blanket on which you're lying. You can feel the warm sun shining down upon you, and you can feel the gentle breeze blowing across your body, cooling you to just the right temperature, so that all you want to do is just keep drifting, and dreaming … and floating … on … and on … and on.

Two. You can hear the sound of the waves gently crashing upon the shore. You can hear the sound of the gulls in the distance, and you can savor the freshness of the pure salt air, as you feel a heavy, relaxed feeling coming over you. You can feel your arms relaxing … you can feel your legs relaxing … and you can feel your entire body relaxing completely. And as I continue to count, and continue to talk, every word that I utter will carry you faster and deeper, faster and deeper, down and down, into a deep, sound, peaceful state of hypnosis.

Three. You can feel your entire body relaxing now … relaxing deeper and faster, and deeper and faster, all of the time.

Four. Sinking down, and shutting down … sinking down, and shutting down … sinking down, and shutting down … shutting down, completely. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the more peaceful, and the more enjoyable, the experience becomes.

Five. Sinking and relaxing, and sinking and relaxing, deeper and faster, deeper and faster all the time. Relaxing so very deeply that you can just let yourself go completely, as you continue drifting down and down, into a deep, blissful state of hypnosis.

Every word that I utter is carrying you faster and deeper, faster and deeper … down … and down … and down, into a deep, blissful state of hypnosis. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go, and the deeper you go, the deeper you're able to go, and the more peaceful, and the more beautiful the experience becomes.

Six. Relaxing so very deeply now … just as peaceful … and as contented … and as trusting as a little baby, nestled in its mother's arms, as you continue drifting on and on, into a deep, sound sleep … a deep, sound sleep.

Seven. Sinking down and shutting down … Sinking down and shutting down … Sinking down and shutting down … shutting down completely.

Eight. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you're able to go. And the deeper you go, the more beautiful and the more enjoyable the experience becomes.

Nine. Sinking down, and shutting down. Sinking down, and shutting down. Sinking down, and shutting down. Sinking down completely.

Ten. Very deeply drifting, in a deep, sound state of hypnosis. And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go. And the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go. And the deeper you go, the stronger the effects of my words become.

Deepening

And now, as you continue sinking deeper with every word that I speak, and with every second that passes, you can imagine … or picture in your mind … a clock dial, with no second hand, and no minute hand on the clock, just an hour hand. And the hour hand is set at twelve.

I'm going to move that hour hand back, one hour at a time, until it's all the way back to one. And with each hour that I move the hand back, you'll go twice as deep as you are right now, and you'll feel twice as good as you feel right now.

There is no end to the depth you can achieve in deep hypnosis … and there's no limit to how good you can feel. And the deeper you go, the deeper you're able to go … and the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go … and the more beautiful, and the more wonderful, and the more enjoyable the experience becomes. So just let yourself go completely, now, as I move the hour hand back, one hour at a time.

And now I've moved the hour hand back … from 12 to 11 … and you're sinking down twice as deep as you are right now.

And now I've moved it back to 10 … and you feel twice as deep, and you feel twice as good, but there's never any sense of strain or overload, for the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go … and the deeper you go, the deeper you're able to go. And the deeper you go, the more wonderful the experience becomes.

And now I've moved it down to 9. Twice as deep, and feeling twice as good …

8. Twice as deep, sinking down and down, and feeling twice as good …

7. Twice as deep again, and feeling twice as good …

6. Deeper yet. Notice what that does to you, and notice how good you feel. And imagine how good you're going to feel when we get all the way down to one.

5. Twice as deep, yet again, and feeling twice as good yet again … deeper … and deeper … And the deeper you go, the deeper you want to go … and the deeper you go, the deeper you are able to go … and the more beautiful, and more wonderful, and the more enjoyable the experience becomes.

4. Deeper … deeper … deeper …

3. Twice as deep, and feeling twice as good …

2. Deeper … deeper … deeper …

1. Infinitely, and unbelievably deep, and continuing to go deeper with every word that I utter, and with every second that passes.

Transferring Awareness to an Alternate Universe

And now, we are reaching down into the vast, untapped potentials that lie within you … and we are releasing … wonderful feelings of happiness … and joy … and wonder … and rapture … and ecstasy … and pleasure and delight. And all these wonderful feelings are flowing out from your innermost depths, sent by your inner healer … filling … and flooding … every muscle and every fiber, and every nerve of your being, with wave after wave of beautiful, indescribable joy, happiness, wonder, ecstasy, and delight. For the stronger we can make them, the more effective they will be … in changing your life into a thing of wondrous beauty.

And so, these feelings come flowing out … and flowing out … There's no end to how good you can feel, and no end to how strong we can make them … If you weren't hypnotized, you couldn't bear a fraction of the joy, and the happiness, and the wonder, and the ecstasy, and the unimaginable delight that is flowing through every muscle and fiber, and cell and nerve of your body, now, in these golden moments. And the more you feel, the more you're able to feel, and the more you feel, the more you want to feel, and the more wonderful, the more rapturous, the experience becomes. This is your time … to savor and experience to the fullest.

As the feelings continue to grow, stronger and stronger, they are becoming infinite in their strength … and infinite in their power … beyond the power of words to describe … infinite, beyond infinity … and eternal, beyond all measure of Eternity.

You find yourself floating … and dissolving … into a wave of infinite, unbounded ecstasy, beyond the limitations of time … beyond the limitations of space … beyond the limitations of the Universe, itself …

You are flowing … into another Universe … where there is no time … there is no space … There is only … a boundless ocean of infinite, unbounded, and everlasting love, at the center of this Universe, which is in the center of all other Universes, and the center of all existence.

Mystical Union with the Infinite

You feel yourself dissolving into this infinite ocean of boundless rapture, ecstasy, love, and delight. And it's as if all of the happiness, and all of the love, and all of the joy, and all of the wonder, and all of the rapture that have ever been felt by all the people who ever walked the face of the earth … are yours … to enjoy … now … in these golden moments, freed from the limitations of time and space.

[*Changing your outlook on life*.] Soak it up, and make it part of you … True happiness comes from within. It's only the separation from this infinite ocean of rapture, wonder, ecstasy, and delight, which is your home beyond the stars … it's only the separation from this ocean where you will spend Eternity … that is the source of all unhappiness, all depression, all anxiety, all loneliness, and all despair.

Soak it up, and make it part of you. This is the fulfillment of your existence – greater than anything you ever dreamed for, longed for, hoped for, or imagined, and far beyond the power of words to describe. Infinite, beyond infinity, and eternal beyond all measure of eternity … yours … to savor … now … and experience to the fullest … in these golden moments of delight.

Happiness comes from within. And regardless of whatever else may be going on in your life, as you continue to return here regularly, to your home beyond the stars, it will have the power to change your life forever and turn each day into a thing of wondrous beauty.

[*Strengthening the will to achieve*.] You are going to be surprised and delighted by all of the wonderful changes and improvements that these experiences will bring in your life. With practice, you will be able to feel this kind of fulfillment whenever you put your whole self into working towards a goal you have chosen. As you think about achieving a goal ahead of time, you can believe it will happen, expect it to happen, feel it happening, and savor in advance the fruits of your success. And with practice, you will be able to act, think, and feel as it if were impossible to fail!

[*Building self-esteem*.] Every path that you have taken, every road that you have trod, has led you here, to the fulfillment of your existence … Infinite, beyond infinity, and eternal beyond all measure of eternity … Greater than anything you have ever hoped for, longed for, dreamed of, or imagined, and far beyond the power of words to describe.

You will come to know who you are, and what God (or destiny, or your karma) has intended for you to do, or you may simply figure it out for yourself. You are a Bearer of the Light. It is your duty, your responsibility, your destiny, and your desire to explore these dimensions of fulfillment to the fullest, both for your own personal growth, and to lead the way for all humankind to follow.

[*Alleviating the effects of stress*.] Because time does not exist in this Universe, even though only a few moments may have passed in the Universe from which you left, when you return, you will feel as rested and refreshed as if you had been away on vacation for a week, a month, or perhaps you may even feel as if you had been gone for an entire year.

[*Preparation for future journeys*.] You love being hypnotized. Because you have been in another Universe, regardless of how much you actually remember of the experience itself, you will always look back upon this journey with fondness, even as you look forward to the next opportunity to return to it, with ever-increasing anticipation.

Regularly practicing experiential hypnosis will improve your life in many different ways, and on many different levels. Each time that you are hypnotized, you will be able to go into hypnosis more quickly. And each time that you are hypnotized, you will be able to obtain even more benefit from the experience.

Return

And now, I'm going to count from one to five, and by the time I get to five you'll be back in the Universe from which you left, at the time and place from which you left, radiant with happiness, and beaming with delight from the happiness that you've been able to bring back with you; for it will change your life, and turn each day into a thing of wondrous beauty. And even though you may only have been away for a few minutes, because you are returning from a place where time does not exist, you will feel just as rested and just as refreshed as if you had been away on a long, extended vacation.

By the time I get to the count of five, you'll be all the way back and ready to open your eyes, feeling wonderful … beaming, and radiant, and flooded with joy.

1. Beginning to come back now …
2. Coming back more and more …
3. Almost back …
4. Just about there …
5. All the way back, and feeling wonderful! You can open your eyes now, feeling wonderful.

* * *

Simple enough, isn't it? What is more remarkable about this induction (or something similar) is that it has actually proven immensely valuable to people in a therapeutic setting. We'll present a few case

histories next. First, however, we wish to remind readers once again that our responses to suggestions are not always entirely the same. There are invariably "wild cards" and other factors that skew the equation. Some of us will respond better than others, and many of us may respond better on one day than the next – which is perfectly normal. In a clinical setting, also, the way clients respond to suggestions depends less on the nature and success of a particular induction than on a number of variables:

> … (a) [their] prehypnotic attitudes, beliefs, intentions, and expectations about hypnosis; (b) their ability to think, fantasize, and absorb themselves in suggestions; (c) their ability to form a trusting relationship with the hypnotist [or, perhaps, in themselves, if attempting this on their own!]; (d) their ability to interpret suggestions appropriately and view their responses as successful; (e) their ability to discern task demands and cues; (f) their ongoing interaction with the hypnotist; and (g) the appropriateness of the therapeutic methods and suggestions to treating the present problem … . (Gibbons & Lynn, 2010, p. 289)

Obviously, then, those readers who are "flying solo" and exploring alternative Universes on their own should simply appreciate that the more open-minded and accepting they are, the more willing they are to accept the suggestions they give themselves, and the more they adopt these new belief systems, the more easily they will begin to see the benefits. Again, the key is practice; the more comfortable you become with hypnosis, hyperempiria, and the multimodal BEST ME suggestions, the easier it will become for you to learn from your explorations. And now, on to case histories!

* * *

We conclude with three actual case histories; only the names have been fictionalized. Readers should note that all three of these applications involved patients with severe psychological problems. Obviously, if such dramatic results can be obtained in a clinical setting, laterosis should prove even more effective for those simply working on their own to resolve conflicts and problems in their daily lives.

CASE ONE: "ROSE"

Rose was a strikingly attractive 32-year-old accountant who was drawing disability benefits for bipolar disorder. Before she was diagnosed, she had been involved in frequent episodes of heavy drug and alcohol use combined with sexual promiscuity that culminated in a suicide attempt at the age of 19. After she was diagnosed and placed on medication, she was enrolled in a program of intensive psychotherapy, which allowed her to stabilize her life well enough to complete college and engage in a series of intense romantic relationships.

Her bipolar disorder was never completely under control. She married her husband, Joe, at the age of 25 after a six-month whirlwind courtship. Joe was very much attached to her, especially because of the intensity that characterized their physical relationship as a result of her latent bipolar tendencies. On the one hand, her tearful dependency when she was depressed appealed to his sense of importance, and on the other hand, the heat of her passion when she was entering her manic phase amply rewarded him for her lack of sexual interest during the times when she was depressed. However, a new problem emerged shortly after their marriage. Rose was given to spending sprees during her manic phases, at which times she would regularly max out the family credit cards and expose them to the threat of bankruptcy.

When the children were young and totally dependent upon them, she managed to keep her spending urges fairly well under control. However, once they became teenagers and gained a measure of financial independence, freed from these restraints, she proceeded to spend so irresponsibly that she caused her husband to lose his business and indeed plunged the family into bankruptcy.

When she came to my office, she announced that she was no longer taking her medication, because it gave her side effects, as did all of the other medication she had ever taken. Despite their recent bankruptcy, she assured me that she would be able to control her spending sprees by herself.

In the course of our conversations, she revealed a previously undisclosed trauma at the age of 17. One of her adult neighbors on the block had lured her into the basement of a house under construction on some slight pretext, promptly removed his trousers, and began to assault her. She could not actually remember whether or not she had been raped, because she blacked out the entire incident. She responded excellently to hypnosis and did not remember what transpired during the induction, as is typical of many people who have a similar history.

After testing her responsiveness to hypnosis over two or three sessions, I led Rose to experience an alternate Universe in which she was able to immerse herself in an ocean of infinite, unbounded, and everlasting love. I reassured her that this was her destiny, her eternal home beyond the stars, and told her that it was only the separation from this infinite ocean of unbounded and everlasting love that was the source of all unhappiness, all loneliness, all anger, and despair. I emphasized that each time she would return to this infinite ocean of infinite, unbounded, and everlasting love, she would be able to take more of it back to the Universe from which she left and the time and place from which she left. And as she realized that true happiness

came from within, it would be a "game changer" in her life, which would change each new day into a thing of wondrous beauty.

After approximately ten sessions, Rose had learned to use these techniques to regulate her own happiness by using self-hypnosis and adjusting her mood sufficiently well that she was able to regulate her moods on a daily basis, with hyperempiric visits to re-charge her emotional batteries in an alternate Universe. She was able to reconcile herself with her husband, and she no longer felt the urge to engage in uncontrollable spending sprees. She continues to be seen on a monthly basis for follow-up visits.

Naturally, no one with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder should attempt to undertake this kind of a treatment by him/herself in the absence of supervision by a duly licensed mental health professional. However, the lessons of this experience – that happiness comes from within, and that people can control their own moods rather than remaining at the mercy of their body chemistry – are by no means intended only for those who have a psychiatric diagnosis. For many people whose concerns go no farther than the ordinary, everyday frustrations that plague us all, they may be all that is needed!

CASE TWO: "SHIRLEY"

Shirley, a 35-year-old mother of two, was admitted to an inpatient psychiatric unit shortly after the birth of her third baby, and after telling her husband that she was having thoughts of suicide. She had miscarried after her first pregnancy, and her second pregnancy was an ectopic pregnancy, which had to be terminated. She had subsequently had her fallopian tubes tied, but then she changed her mind, and the sterilization procedure was successfully reversed. She had given birth to two healthy children, who were four and six when this, her third baby, was born.

Shirley was placed on psychotropic medication and released after one week, with diagnoses of depression related to childbirth, irritable bowel syndrome, and panic attacks. She was referred to Dr. Gibbons for individual follow-up therapy. She told Dr. Gibbons that even though she was taking her medication regularly in the prescribed dosage, she was having frequent nightmares and waking up with extreme anxiety every morning. She continued to suffer from poor appetite and digestive difficulties.

Shirley described her husband as cold and distant. He apparently failed to understand the depth of her emotional need, and was unwilling to seek counseling or psychotherapy because he "did not believe in it." She got along well with her relatives on both sides of the family. Her older children presented no behavioral problems beyond what might be expected from other youngsters in their age group. When she was asked about her early upbringing, she reported that she had received very little attention from her parents as she grew up, and that her father was extremely bad-tempered. He would always scold her unmercifully if her grades were not absolutely perfect. Shirley seemed to be a person who had unrealistically high standards for herself. Because of her upbringing, anything short of perfection was interpreted as a failure. With the increased responsibility of caring for three children, she simply became overwhelmed.

Initially employing a cognitive-behavioral approach, Dr. Gibbons began by discussing the emotional consequences of her deep-seated belief that she must be perfect in all respects in order to be worthwhile, and other beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts that might be at the root of her difficulty. At the end of the first two sessions, Shirley stated, "I can wrap my head around it, but I just can't wrap my heart around it." However, she responded extremely well to hypnosis.

To provide corrective experiences which would counteract her feelings of depression, Shirley was guided in hypnosis to experience the feeling of being in an alternate Universe and immersed in an ocean of infinite, unbounded, and everlasting love, fulfilling her deepest human need to be loved and cared for during her time of greatest stress. She learned through direct personal experience that happiness comes from within, which enabled her to stop judging herself by artificially high standards of external performance. She reported immediate improvement in her prevailing mood and energy level, and in her ability to cope with the seemingly endless demands of caring for three young children. After three more sessions, Shirley reported that except for her usual bathroom breaks, she was sleeping peacefully through the night. Her appetite had returned to normal. Her panic attacks had ceased, and she no longer felt anxious and depressed. Follow-up contacts conducted at one-month intervals for each of the following six months indicated that her symptoms had not returned.

CASE THREE: "MARIE"

Marie is a 47-year-old native of France, who taught French at a local high school. She was divorced 10 years ago, when she discovered that her husband was having an affair with her mother. She has one daughter, age fifteen, who is a special needs child with cerebral palsy. She is a breast cancer survivor, and underwent a partial mastectomy. She is currently in a relationship with an unemployed man who has been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome. She is the only girlfriend he has ever had, and she stated that she felt secure with him because he is not likely to become involved with anyone else (due to his lack of social skills).

Marie came to Dr. Gibbons' office complaining of frequent panic attacks, which began when she discovered a European hornet fly-

ing around her bedroom one morning. This is a frightening insect approximately the length of a human thumb. She contacted an exterminator, who discovered their nest atop her chimney and promptly destroyed it. However, her panic attacks continued. She reported that a major contributor to her anxiety was the fact that she seemed unable to motivate herself to acquire a second Master's degree, which she desired very much, both for personal and professional reasons.

Marie responded very well to hypnosis, and she was guided through several experiences of immersion in the ocean of love in an alternate Universe. After she reported no further panic attacks and a much more "try and call" outlook on life, she also seemed to benefit a great deal from the suggestions relating the session to emotions she was feeling in an alternate Universe from the achievement of a distant goal.

After she had been coming to Dr. Gibbons' office for approximately three months, Marie enrolled in Thomas Edison State College, an accredited online branch of the New Jersey State system, where she is actively pursuing the Master's degree that she had so long desired. Asked about whether or not these experiences were effective in building up her motivation and in increasing her self-confidence, she exclaimed, "Oh God, yes!"

Her regular weekly sessions were discontinued after four months, and she now reports regularly about once a month for what she refers to as a "tune-up." She reports no major difficulties with anxiety beyond those that could be expected in the daily conduct of her life.

Chapter 7
The Ultra-Height Technique

Ultra-Height is a trance technique that derives from the tradition of the hypnotist Dave Elman, who taught medical hypnosis to thousands of doctors and dentists during the 1950s and wrote an influential book called *Hypnotherapy*. It was invented by his student Gerald Kein in the late 1980s as a method for reaching a spiritual state in which the cause and cure of a person's problems could be uncovered. It is still practiced today by hypnotists trained at Kein's network of OMNI Hypnosis schools as a valuable hypnotic technique in working with a client's issues. Our focus, of course, is on the spiritual experiences possible during ascension to the Ultra-Height state.

The client is first brought down into very deep hypnosis using the famous Dave Elman Induction. He is then brought even deeper into what is known as the euphoric coma state. From there he is brought up instead of down, rising to a state of intense peace, joy, love, clarity, and heightened awareness known as Ultra-Height.

Not everyone who enters the Ultra-Height state has a spiritual experience, but many clients report a sense of connection with God or the Divine. For example, one Islamic client has said that he felt like Allah was walking with him. Many clients report feelings of unconditional love and unconditional acceptance. One person who has experienced Ultra-Height told me that it feels like what religion ought to be.

Dave Elman was born May 6, 1900. His father was interested in hypnosis and when Dave was around six, he saw his father cure a stuttering case using hypnotic trance. When he was age eight, his father developed cancer. A family friend, who was also a hypnotist, used hypnosis to successfully relieve his father's cancer pain. Dave was able to play with his Dad again. He set about learning hypnotic techniques from this friend and later, after reading books on hypnosis and seeing vaudeville shows, he experimented with hypnosis on his school classmates and any adult who would agree to be a subject. With his father gone and his mother trying to look after a large family, Dave went out to make money. From age 14 to 21 he worked in vaudeville, billing himself as "The World's Youngest and Fastest Hypnotist." As a talented saxophonist and comedian, he had other roles on the vaudeville stage as well. In his twenties he worked as a song writer and jazz musician. Eddie Cantor recorded one of his songs and he also collaborated with the legendary blues musician W. C. Handy. In his late twenties and early thirties Dave worked writing, producing, and performing in radio shows. For example, Kate Smith, known as "the songbird of the South," had him write some of her shows. When he was 37 his eldest son died from pneumonia. To distract himself, he threw himself into developing a new show called "Hobby Lobby," in which ordinary people became advocates for their unusual hobbies. It was a huge hit. The first show featured a man whose hobby was hypnosis and this prompted Dave to return to hypnosis by giving the occasional charity demonstration. He not only wrote, produced, and directed "Hobby Lobby," he was master of ceremonies on air, as well. First lady Eleanor Roosevelt replaced him as host two times when he couldn't go on himself. The program ran for over 10 years and, along with a very popular war bond show that he developed called "Victory Auction," it made Dave a fairly wealthy man. He could afford to make a career change, then, when local doctors who had seen some of his demonstration shows persistently asked him to teach them hypnosis. He had been thinking about hypnosis, studying it, and mulling his ideas on applying it in

medical situations for the 30 years since he last performed his stage show in his youth. He saw teaching hypnosis as a way to make a personal and enduring contribution to the welfare of his countrymen. During his fifties Dave and his wife, Pauline, taught hypnosis classes to thousands of doctors and dentists, both in New Jersey and around the country. They were on the road in different cities sometimes for months at a time. When he was 62 Dave suffered a major heart attack. During his recovery he wrote his classic book *Findings in Hypnosis*, a distillation of his teachings on medical hypnosis. It was later republished under the title *Hypnotherapy*. Five years later he was dead at age 67.

My original intention was to reprint an excerpt from *Hypnotherapy*, but I was unable to persuade the publisher to follow my plan. He didn't want to break Dave Elman's book into pieces. I urge you to get a copy and read it for yourself. It is a wonderful book, very vividly written and packed with startling information. I am going to summarize here the famous Dave Elman hypnosis induction, which allows quick access to the somnambulistic state; Elman's further discovery of how to reach the euphoric coma state; and Gerald Kein's use of these two methods as gateways to the spiritual Ultra-Height state. You should note that when I use quote marks to indicate what the hypnotherapist says in these summaries, I am condensing down, in some cases way down, from what the therapist actually says.

The hypnotic depth scale is usually divided into light, medium, and deep hypnosis. Deep hypnosis is the stage in which amnesia, anesthesia, hallucinations, and regression to earlier periods of life can be brought about. It is also called somnambulism, a term derived from sleepwalking, because frequently subjects will be able to open their eyes at this level and function as if they were awake, even though they are still deep in the hypnotic trance. In order for hypnosis to be useful in a medical practice, Elman believed that doctors had to be able to induce deep hypnotic somnambulism within one to

three minutes with a very high percentage of their patients. Waiting through a long induction period would waste too much of a doctor's valuable time. Doctors needed immediate access to the tools of anesthesia and regression to do their therapeutic work. Elman had already developed extremely fast methods for inducing hypnosis for his stage show when he billed himself as the "World's Youngest and Fastest Hypnotist." In order to meet the one-to-three-minute goal of extremely fast deep-trance somnambulism for his doctors, Elman strung together his techniques into what is now known as the Elman Induction, a procedure still in use among professional hypnotherapists. You can google "Elman Induction" and read several discussions of the method, including small tweaks others have made to make improvements. Elman writes, "I find that I can achieve deep somnambulism with almost every subject with whom I work. The only time I don't get the deep hypnosis is when fear is present, preventing relaxation. My students have found that by following these techniques they are able to get a very high percentage of success in inducing the deep state known as somnambulism."

The Elman Induction:

1. **Light trance via relaxation:** Elman believed that the lighter stages of hypnosis were produced by physical relaxation of the body. He would first induce a light to medium trance by telling the subject to relax their closed eyes to the point that they would not work at all. "Wholly relax the muscles of the eyes. Let the feeling of relaxation in your eyes spread all the way to your toes. Test your eyes now, make sure they won't work." If they can open their eyes, he tells them that they haven't completely followed directions and has them relax their eyes even more. The inability to open the eyes confirms an expectation that the power of hypnosis is beginning to take hold. In an ordinary state one can always open or close one's eyes. (Elman page 61)

2. **Repeated induction:** In a book by the neurologist Hippolyte Bernheim, one of the giants in the early study of hypnosis, Elman read about a case in which a subject was hypnotized once a week. For the first four weeks, only a light trance was obtained, but during the fifth session the subject went to deeper, somnambulistic levels. Elman wondered if you could speed up the process and get the same result by hypnotizing someone every day or every hour. Then he wondered if you could *really* speed up the process of deepening trance by repeatedly waking a person and then plunging him back into hypnosis. He experimented and found that he could bring a subject very quickly down into somnambulism by giving deepening suggestions while having the subject open and close the eyes three different times. "In a moment you will open and close your eyes and the relaxation in your body will double. Now open your eyes and close them." The operator repeats this procedure, telling the subject that the relaxation will double each time. The procedure of waking a subject and then immediately bringing the subject down into a deeper trance is called "fractionation" by hypnotists.

3. **The hand-lift test:** The operator says that he is going to lift the subject's hand and let it drop. It will be completely relaxed and will just fall back down limp and heavy as lead when it's dropped. The operator lifts the hand and then drops it and compliments the subject on how limp and relaxed it is. If there is still tension in the hand, more relaxation suggestions and iterations of eye opening and closing can be done. The limpness of the hand again confirms the expectation that the power of hypnosis is taking hold. In an ordinary state one's hand is not normally so relaxed, limp, and heavy.

4. **Relaxation into somnambulism:** Elman believed that in somnambulism not only the body but the mind is relaxed as well. The critical faculties are suspended. When relaxation becomes deep enough, the mind itself becomes blank for a time. It is in this state that it is possible to produce phenomena characteristic of somnambulism, such as amnesia and anesthesia. Producing these phenomena moves the subject deeper and deeper into the somnambulistic state. The phenomenon that Elman chose to use to move his subjects deeper into somnambulism was amnesia for numbers. "Count out loud starting from 100 moving backward. Your relaxation will double each time you say a number. By the time you have reached 96 you will be so relaxed that all the numbers will have disappeared. You won't be able to think of another number." Each time the subject says a number the hypnotherapist gives suggestions that relaxation is doubling and that the numbers are disappearing. When the subject can't think of any more numbers, amnesia is in effect and the state of somnambulism has been reached. Sometimes the numbers will still be there, but the subject is too relaxed to say anything about them. This is what Elman calls artificial somnambulism. It is a state of deep relaxation, but it is not the deep trance state needed for anesthesia and regression.

At the end of the Elman Induction the subject is in the state of hypnotic deep-trance somnambulism and it has only taken the therapist one to three minutes to produce.

It should be noted that the Elman induction is a process that does not have to be done with the specific steps listed above. The phases are relaxation, catalepsy of a small muscle group (eyelids), fractionation by partial waking from the trance and plunging back down

again (opening and closing the eyes), catalepsy of a large muscle group (arm-lift test), and selective amnesia by suggestion (amnesia for numbers). For example, relaxation could be done with images of a hot shower on the back of the neck. Catalepsy of a small muscle group could be done with relaxation of the toes to the point where they will not move. Fractionation could be to repeat the first lines of the Gettysburg Address and then double the relaxation and go into deep hypnosis. Catalepsy of a large muscle group could be an arm rigidity test rather than an arm lift test. Amnesia could be done with names or calendar months, etc.

The Euphoric Coma State

Sometimes during a stage hypnosis show a subject who has been brought up on stage will fall into a completely unresponsive state and be very hard to wake up, causing the audience to be fearful for the subject and scornful of the hypnotist. This can even happen to members of the audience watching the show. Stage hypnotists call this the coma state. When it happened to Dave Elman, he did not just chalk it up to the vicissitudes of the profession, he would talk to the subjects afterwards to try to find out what was going on. During these investigations he found a way to just whisper a few words into a subject's ear and bring that person out of the coma state very quickly. Later on, he taught his method to the doctors he trained, so that if a patient lapsed into the coma state, they would know how to deal with it.

Elman cites a case that happened in Fair Lawn, New Jersey. It was written up for the local papers and was picked up and reprinted in papers all across the country. A member of the audience fell into the coma state during a stage hypnotist's show. The people around him were alarmed and became very agitated. The hypnotist came down from the stage into the audience and tried to calm everyone down and wake the subject up, but all of his usual techniques failed. One

of Dave Elman's trained doctors volunteered to help. The hypnotist protested that the man didn't need a doctor, he was just hypnotized. Finally, not knowing what to do himself, he let the doctor give it a try, saying that once the doctor had failed, he would wake the man himself. The doctor whispered a few words into the man's ear and he immediately awakened. It seemed like magic to the hypnotist and the audience.

Through his interviewing Elman had discovered that the coma state is invariably one where the subject feels absolutely wonderful. It is a state of euphoria. The subject is aware of what is going on but is so completely relaxed and feeling so good that he doesn't respond to stimulation at all, including suggestions to open his eyes and wake up. Elman taught his doctors to whisper, "If you don't wake up right now, you will never be able to be hypnotized again." Words like these always brought the subject out of the trance, since no one wanted to lose the ability to return to such a wonderfully pleasurable state.

Elman learned some interesting things during his investigations. Both spontaneous anesthesia and spontaneous catalepsy develop in the coma state. Anesthesia, of course, is the numbing of the body so that it does not react to pain or even feel a touch. In the euphoric coma state the body develops anesthesia spontaneously, without any suggestions for numbness. Clamps can be applied without any reaction. Surgery can be performed without pain.

Catalepsy is a state of prolonged rigid posture. It is the ability of muscles to be in a fixed position for long periods of time without tiring. For example, during hypnosis an operator might stretch a person's arm out and say, "Now your arm is becoming so rigid that you cannot bend it," and the subject will be unable to bend his arm. It will be stiff, held straight out in front of the body, and just stay that way. Catalepsy can be a powerful phenomenon. The most impres-

sive demonstration of induced catalepsy occurs when a subject is told that his whole body is rigid. He is then stretched out between two chairs, his head on one and his feet on the other, and someone sits on his chest. *Spontaneous* catalepsy occurs when no suggestion for rigidity is given. For example, the operator stretches the subject's arm out and it just stays that way of its own accord for a long period of time. With spontaneous catalepsy the operator can bend the hypnotic subject's body into different positions and the subject will just stay that way, muscles locked. The tendency to spontaneous catalepsy can develop even in a light trance.

Elman called the coma state the Esdaile state, after the British surgeon James Esdaile (1808–1859) who performed numerous operations in India using a mesmeric trance involving spontaneous anesthesia. Esdaile had heard about mesmerism but didn't know much about it other than that it was induced by passes of the operator's hands over the body of the subject. These passes were supposed to project a subtle fluid called animal magnetism into the subject. Esdaile tested this out and when it actually worked to produce an anesthetic trance, he hired assistants to do the hand passes. Here is Esdaile telling us that he does *NOT* tell the subject that he is trying to induce anesthesia for a surgical operation. "Desire the patient to lie down, and compose himself to sleep, taking care, if you wish to operate, that he does not know your intention: this object may be gained by saying that it is only a trial; for fear and expectation are destructive to the physical impression required." Later, after the passes have been performed for at least an hour, the patient is tested for spontaneous catalepsy and anesthesia. "It is better not to test the patient's condition by speaking to him, but by gently trying if the cataleptic tendency exits in the arms. If the arms remain fixed in any position they are left in, and require some force to move them out of every new position, the process has been successful; the patient may soon after be called upon by name, and pricked, and if he does not awake, the operation may be proceeded with." Esdaile occasionally referred to the trance he

produced as a coma: "…the following process is … effectual in producing coma…." Note that the patient does not respond when called by name. I believe that Elman based his identification of the euphoric coma state as the Esdaile state on four similarities. The subject is unresponsive, the subject develops spontaneous catalepsy, the subject develops spontaneous anesthesia, and the anesthesia is deep enough to allow surgery. (Esdaile quotes are from Section 2 A, "Catalepsy in Historical Perspective," in *Experiencing Hypnosis: Therapeutic Approaches to Altered States*, by Milton H. Erickson and Ernest L. Rossi [New York: Irvington Publishers, 1981].)

When Elman began teaching hypnosis in the 1950s, everyone believed that the coma state was accidental. No one could induce it intentionally. He told his doctors about the coma and taught them how to bring a subject out of the state, but he was unable to demonstrate the coma for his students. One day while he was teaching in Baltimore a doctor told him that he had a patient who went so deeply into somnambulism that he thought Dave could bring him down into the coma state with a little coaxing. Dave agreed to try, thinking that if he failed it would at least show that the coma state couldn't be produced intentionally. He did succeed, however, and went on to produce the coma state in other people, and finally in whole groups of people at the same time. The coma demonstration became a regular part of his classes. His doctors would sometimes spend hours testing the coma subject. After learning the technique, they began using it to relieve arthritis and cancer pain, to minimize postoperative discomfort when a limb had to be immobilized, and for surgery. Obstetricians used it for delivery, ear, nose, and throat specialists for nose and throat operations, and orthopedists for the reduction of compound fractures. Brain surgery, heart surgery, and appendectomies were all done without chemical anesthesia.

When his doctors experienced the coma state for themselves, they unanimously said that it was absolutely wonderful. Even though

they were completely aware of what was going on, they were so deeply relaxed and they felt so good that they just didn't want to respond to anything going on around them.

After the subject was brought down into the somnambulistic trance, Elman would proceed in the following way: First he would tell the subject that even though he was deeply relaxed, there were deeper levels of relaxation and that there was a bottom level, a basement, that was the lowest possible level. The next level down from his present state Elman would call floor A. The next level after that, floor B. And the bottom level, the basement of relaxation, he would call floor C. To get to floor A the subject had to relax twice as much as he had already. To get to floor B he had to relax twice as much as at floor A. And to get to floor C, the very bottom, he had to relax twice as much as at floor B. "You are now on an elevator going from your current level down and down to floor A. Your relaxation is getting deeper and deeper as you go until it doubles. When you reach floor A, say the letter A out loud." The same method is used to take the subject down from A to B and from B to C. At floor A the subject murmurs the letter A. At floor B he tries to say the letter and moves his lips, but a sound barely comes out. At floor C the subject should not be able to move his lips or make a sound. Now comes a series of four tests to make sure the subject is in the coma state. First is the test for anesthesia. For example, a surgical allis clamp is used to grasp the subject's arm. There should be no reaction. If suggestion has to be used to produce anesthesia, it is not the coma state. Second, he is asked to move a large muscle group such as an arm or a leg. If he is in the coma state, he won't be able to do this. Third, he is asked to move a small muscle group, such as the eyes. If he is in the coma state, he won't be able to open his eyes – there won't be any movement of the eye muscles at all. Finally, there is a test for catalepsy. A limb is moved, and if it stays exactly where you put it, catalepsy is present. Again, to make a successful test this cannot be done with suggestion – catalepsy has to emerge spontaneously.

Coma state subjects are so deeply relaxed that they are unable to respond physically. However, they can and do accept hypnotic suggestions that don't involve the body, including post-hypnotic suggestions. Although Dave Elman used the full Elman Induction to bring his subjects down into somnambulism before inducing the coma state, one of his doctors discovered that it is possible to leave amnesia for numbers out of the process and still get the full coma state.

Ultra-Height

Gerald F. Kein, better known as Jerry Kein, is the inventor of Ultra-Height. As a teen he was interested in hypnosis and got instruction from local practitioners in New Jersey. When he asked them "who is the best teacher of hypnosis" they invariably said Dave Elman. But they also said that Elman would never take him on as a student. He only taught doctors and dentists. The town where Dave Elman lived was forty minutes away by bus, but Jerry decided that every Thursday afternoon he would go over to see if he couldn't get Dave Elman to teach him hypnosis. The first time he went he met Pauline, Dave's wife, who was very nice to him but told him the same thing: Dave only taught doctors and dentists. After a month he finally found Dave Elman working in his garden. "So, you're the youngster that keeps coming around." Dave invited him in for a talk. In the end he said, no, he wouldn't take him on as a paid student, but he was starting to tape-record classes and needed someone to operate the recorder. Some of those recordings are still in existence. If you go to an OMNI Hypnosis school, one of the network of hypnosis schools that Jerry Kein founded, you will still sometimes hear a tape of Dave Elman teaching hypnosis. Jerry is now a grand old man in the field. He has taught thousands of students and is recognized as a master practitioner and teacher. Sometime in the late eighties and early nineties he originated and refined the Ultra-Height technique.

Having taken the client down into deep trance somnambulism and even further down into the euphoric coma state, the operator moves on to taking the client up into the Ultra-Height state. Here is a capsule summary of the process. The actual procedure, with all its detailed suggestions, is far longer.

1. The operator gives suggestions that as the body goes deeper into relaxation, the mind can separate from the body and go to a much higher place, a place of awareness, understanding, and healing. Soon, he says, he will count from 1 to 10. With each number the body will become more relaxed and the mind will rise easily into an awareness of all things and a deep inner peace. The operator counts, interspersing the numbers with suggestions to separate from the body and move higher and higher into peace, clarity, and light. The client will feel more and more alive as the mind rises.

2. There is a pause for rest to become familiar with the new state. The suggestion is given that the client is beginning to open to new and unusual impressions from the surroundings.

3. The operator says there is a much, much higher level, a level of higher mind called Ultra-Height. It is easy to get to. The client should imagine a beautiful, lighted tunnel coming up from the head. The operator again counts from 1 to 10, this time with suggestions of going up, rising higher and higher, through the tunnel into safety, joy, peace, love, and clarity. When Ultra-Height is reached, it is a place of total healing and total knowledge. The operator says to feel the beauty and become aware of the surroundings.

4. Then there is another period of silence and rest.

5. In the next section the emphasis is on healing and on becoming aware of what needs to be done to heal. It ends again in a period of silence.

6. Now the client is encouraged to talk about feelings and surroundings. If the client focuses on a problem, he is asked to discover the cause of the problem. If he doesn't want to share about it, he is asked to say a single word to show that he has discovered the cause. Next the client is asked to discover the solution to the problem. If he can apply the solution from the Ultra-Height state, he is asked to do so. If it can be healed in another part of the client's life, he is told that he can and will do it easily.

7. Now there is a request to be open to any information from anywhere that will increase individual understanding and well-being. After this there is a suggestion that the client will easily be able to return to the Ultra-Height state. Then comes a count of 1 to 10 to bring the mind back and merge it with the body again. Finally, there is a count of one to five to bring the client out of trance.

Larry Lambert, the hypnotherapist who taught me Ultra-Height, tells me that he uses the technique with 40 percent to 50 percent of his clients. It is particularly good when the client is struggling and feels stuck but can't really say how. Ultra-Height can tease out the essential issues. Sometimes it becomes obvious during the second or third session that a client is holding back information. With Ultra-Height you don't have to delve, you can remain non-specific about issues and still do good work. When you regress a client to the cause of a problem, there is usually a lot of pain, negativity, and struggle because the episode being relived was so agonizing. With Ultra-Height painful episodes can be reevaluated while the client is saturated with peace and love.

My teacher Larry adapts the script to fit the belief system of the client. For instance, if he is working with a Baptist minister's wife he will talk about God, providence, and the Holy Spirit. If he is working with someone who has New-Age metaphysical beliefs, he will talk about archangels and spirit guides.

As I said in the beginning of this article, not everyone who enters the Ultra-Height state has a spiritual experience, but many clients report a sense of connection with God or the Divine. Many clients report feelings of unconditional love and unconditional acceptance.

Ultra-Height and Christian Mysticism

The coma state, with its euphoria, catalepsy, and anesthesia, is very similar to what occurs during Christian mystical transports. Evelyn Underhill writes in her classic book *Mysticism*:

> During the trance, breathing and circulation are depressed. The body is more or less cold and rigid, remaining in the exact position which it occupied at the oncoming of the ecstasy, however difficult and unnatural this pose may be. Sometimes entrancement is so deep that there is complete anesthesia, as in the case which I quote from the life of St. Catherine of Siena … instances of ecstatic anesthesia abound in the lives of the saints …

She notes a difference between monoideism, the state of absorption in a single idea to the point of trance, and mystical experience: in mystical experience the subject of concentration is religious, i.e., there is an expectation of communion and union with God, of the experience of mystical bliss.

The euphoric coma state is related to complete relaxation. Entry into the somnambulistic trance is not strictly necessary. The induction

aims at the basement of relaxation, where there is no lower level. It is this complete relaxation which seems to promote euphoria.

The euphoria of the coma state plus the sense of oneness that develops in deep trance plus the monoideism of concentration on a religious subject are all factors that I estimate are involved in a mystical experience. This hypothesis, of course, needs to be tested with real world experiments aimed at producing mystical experiences quickly and easily.

Speculations on the Origins of Ultra-Height

Much of the Ultra-Height process comes from Dave Elman. It uses the Elman Induction and his discoveries about the euphoric coma state. Rising into a spiritual realm, becoming more awake and aware as you go up, probably derives from the hypnotherapist Don Gibbons, who first wrote a book about the procedure in 1973, *Beyond Hypnosis: Explorations in Hyperempiria*. Two items in the Ultra-Height script are very similar to Don Gibbons' hyperemperia: the balloon rising into the sky and the words "the higher you go, the better you feel." The tunnel from the head to the Ultra-Height state probably derives from descriptions found in near-death experiences of traveling through a tunnel toward an overwhelming experience of light. Frequently, when a person first enters into Ultra-Height, they meet someone, for example a father or a grandmother, who was an extremely important person in their life. This is similar to what often happens in near-death experiences – the dying person is met by loving relatives. Raymond Moody initiated near-death research in 1975 with his book *Life after Life*. Hence both hyperempiria and descriptions of near-death experiences were around in the late 1980s when Jerry Kein was trying to create his new hypnosis technique for accessing the Ultra-Height state.

Available Resources:

There are two relevant self-hypnosis mp3 files available from the OMNI Hypnosis Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, "Ultra-Height for Healing" ($9.95) and "Maxi-Depth Hypnosis Training" ($14.95), https://omnihypnosis.com/shop/sh100-ultra-height-healing/.

You can also take the Ultra-Height two-day workshop available at many of the OMNI Hypnosis Centers around the country. Better yet, you can take the full hypnosis training and become a certified hypnotherapist. This will give you the skills necessary to deal with whatever happens in hypnosis, not just a run-through on how to do Ultra-Height.

Chapter 8
Ronald Havens – My Pursuit of Cosmic Consciousness

Editor: This is an excerpt from Ronald A. Havens' book *Self Hypnosis for Cosmic Consciousness: Achieving Altered States, Mystical Experiences, and Spiritual Enlightenment* (Bethel, CT: Crown House Publishing, 2007).

Crown House Publishing says this about Dr. Havens:

> Ronald Havens is a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Springfield where he taught for over 30 years. Throughout that time he also conducted a part time private practice, wrote numerous articles and spoke extensively on the therapeutic uses of hypnosis, and led professional training workshops on Ericksonian approaches to hypnotherapy throughout the country.

The first half of Dr. Havens' book is a discussion of the induction of mystical experience using Ericksonian methods of hypnosis. The second half is a series of hypnosis scripts for producing mystical states. The excerpt here, about his search for a way to produce mystical ecstasy, is from chapter 1 of the book. You will have to go to the book itself to look at the scripts.

Scripts that Dr. Havens gives in his book:

Chapter 6: Hypnotic Immersions in Light
- A Distant Star
- Be Your Own Light
- Brilliant Ideas

Chapter 7: Hypnotic Surges of Energy
- Electrified Cells
- A Rush of Emotion
- Physical Sensitivities
- Roller Coasters

Chapter 8: Hypnotic Reverberations of Sound
- A Chorus of Angels
- Zen Chants
- The Vibration of Atoms

Chapter 9: Hypnotic Awareness of Perfection
- Purification
- The Clearing
- Truth and Beauty

Chapter 10: Hypnotic Immersions in Universal
- Love
- Creation Countdown
- An Embrace

Chapter 11: Hypnotic Oneness with the Cosmos
- Cosmic Connections
- Unifications
- Magnifications

Ronald Havens

It has now been over 30 years since I began investigating the possibility of using trance to stimulate the higher state of mind that various authors have referred to as “ecstasy”, “spirituality”, “transcendental consciousness”, “cosmic consciousness”, “mystical

enlightenment", or "peak experiences". My interest in this topic began in the 1970s when I attended a presentation on spirituality and hypnosis by Bertha Rodger, MD, during an American Society of Clinical Hypnosis conference. I had never met or even heard of Dr Rodger and had no idea who she was, but the moment this radiant, white-haired, grandmotherly apparition with a beatific smile and a playful twinkle in her eyes entered the room, I knew she was our session leader.

At the time, I was in the process of finishing my dissertation on the use of modeling to alter hypnotizability and was in the middle of my internship as a doctoral student in clinical psychology. I thought I knew all there was to know about hypnosis and about therapeutic moments, but I was about to find out that I was wrong. Dr Rodger gave a brief lecture on her use of hypnosis for anesthesia and spiritual healing in a hospital setting and then led the audience through the type of induction and suggestion processes she was then using with her patients.

I was not particularly responsive to hypnotic suggestions back then, in spite of my interest in the field, and as a result my reactions to her suggestions probably were pretty mild compared to the responses of the other audience members around me. Nonetheless, when she described a light in the distance growing brighter and brighter, coming closer and closer, I could imagine seeing it reasonably clearly. And when she added a soft chorus of voices growing louder and louder, I could imagine hearing that as well. As that intense light and those harmonious sounds began to surround me, to engulf my awareness, I suddenly felt a rush of energy, a tingling surge of sensation and emotion throughout my entire body. Rather than riding that wave of energy, however, I quickly pulled myself out of it. It was too intense, too disorienting for me; it was more of a high than I was able to tolerate, it was a more rapid ascent into a field of pure consciousness than I could stand at that time. Nonetheless, this relatively brief but powerful episode was enticing enough to have long-term, life-changing consequences.

After that session, I was intrigued. Even though the experience was essentially intolerable, it also was too intense to ignore. Over the next few weeks and months I began to feel somewhat dissatisfied. Like a potential addict who had just received a taste of bliss, I wanted more of that experience and I also wanted to find out how to help others experience it as well.

I already believed that therapy can happen in an instant. I had read about, experienced, and even created one or two "therapeutic moments" (those sudden flashes of insight or changes in perspective that are prompted by what often is an otherwise innocuous comment, action, or situation). I also was familiar with Abraham Maslow's work on the therapeutic value of peak experiences, and had, quite unintentionally, entered such states several times myself.

But what I experienced with Dr Rodger that day was a change in consciousness unlike anything I had ever experienced before. In hindsight, it felt like I was dissolving into the underlying energy of the universe and becoming unrestrained emotionally, perceptually, and intellectually. Although this impression was derived from just a brief step across the threshold, from a momentary and somewhat terrifying plunge into that altered state of mind, I began to wonder if such experiences could be therapeutically useful. I also began to wonder if I could use hypnosis to precipitate similar alterations in consciousness.

One might think that the logical thing for me to do at that point would be to do exactly what Dr Rodger did, use hypnosis to immerse people, myself included, in an intense white light. But like any well-indoctrinated, left-brained social science graduate student, I first needed to *understand* what I was doing, to have a rationale or a theory for it. Consequently, rather than blindly following Dr Rodger's lead, which would have been the logical and most productive thing to do, I did what I was trained to do instead. I began reading and thinking.

I read about mysticism, spirituality, Buddhism, Zen, and Taoism. I read books by Alan Watts, D. T Suzuki, Thomas Merton. I read William James' book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902/1929) and *The Cloud of Unknowing*, as translated by Ira Progoff (1957). Eventually I discovered *Cosmic Consciousness* by Richard Bucke (1900/1974), and John White's remarkable collection of essays on the topic (*The Highest State of Consciousness*, 1972). Finally, Charles Tart's *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969) contained a chapter by Arthur Deikman entitled, "Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience", which, along with the dual mind view proposed by Robert Ornstein in *The Psychology of Consciousness* (1972), essentially defined and directed my thinking about the nature and source of transcendental experiences for the next 30 years.

Eventually, based upon my reading in the field, I forgot all about the light and became convinced, instead, that cosmic or mystical consciousness experiences are created by a momentary loss of a sense of self, a dissolving of the Ego, an evaporation of the restrictions ordinarily imposed by the conscious mind's language-based construction of reality. I want to make it clear that this was not my idea. It was a conclusion based on the thinking of many others at the time. Various renowned "thinkers" had decided that getting rid of the thinking Self was the key to transcendence, and I thought that this idea made a lot of sense. After all, this conceptualization seemed to be consistent with the available research at that time on brain wave patterns (alpha waves) during meditative states and with the dominant theories of consciousness at the time as well. Accordingly, the elimination of thought, the evaporation of the Self, became my goal.

The first time I tried suggesting the disappearance of the Self to a hypnotic subject, however, the end result was anything but a mystical episode. Instead, the young woman in question reacted with a burst of

anxiety and an immediate reorientation to wakeful awareness. Oddly enough, it had not occurred to me that experiencing the Self suddenly "disappearing", even imaginatively, might not appeal to everyone. It apparently seemed a bit too much like "dying" for her taste.

This incident suggested the need for a more gentle approach. Accordingly, I decided to conduct a survey to determine what hypnotically induced experiences people are able to tolerate most easily. What I found probably will seem intuitively obvious to you. What I found is that people do not like the idea of losing abilities, perceptual capacities, or personal orientation in time and space, but they do like the idea of having their perceptual acuities increased.

I subsequently used this data to construct a series of trance sessions that led participants very gradually from relatively mundane, easily accepted enhancements and alterations of their inner experiences toward potentially more threatening losses of perception, orientation, cognition, and self identity. I then solicited volunteers and led them through the graduated series of sessions I had developed. The end result was that a majority of participants actually did report mystical types of experiences following the suggested loss of a sense of self and these experiences were then followed two weeks later by descriptions of relatively minor but positive changes in emotion, attitude and behavior.

I reported these promising, and admittedly highly preliminary, results during the Annual Convention of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, held in St Louis, Missouri, in 1978, and eventually published an article about them in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* (Havens, 1982). The response to these two reports was, quite literally, overwhelming.

I received hundreds of requests for reprints of my presentation and my article from people all over the world and from all walks of life. I

was inundated by requests for audiotapes of the trance sessions I had used and most requests noted that price was not a concern. Several people even traveled across the country to my private practice office in order to experience cosmic consciousness for themselves.

I was thoroughly unprepared for such enthusiasm and uncomfortable with the notion that a neophyte like myself could suddenly become a sought-after expert regarding such an esoteric and almost sacred phenomenon. The universality and intensity of the thirst for cosmic consciousness surprised me. I had only just begun exploring the experience myself and was not at all confident that what I had to offer at that point was worth all that fuss. After all, my research, although published, was just a pilot study and not a well-controlled assessment of the effectiveness of these procedures overall.

Furthermore, I was well aware that most approaches to hypnosis are relatively ineffective. Only a small percentage of the general population responds well to a traditional hypnotic induction and suggestion process. Although I had begun to explore a more promising hypnotic approach, one developed by Milton H. Erickson and his followers, I was not yet completely comfortable with it. I was not convinced that I even knew how to enable everyone to experience a trance, much less use that trance state to then eliminate a sense of the Self.

At the same time, I was, paradoxically, slightly terrified that my approach would actually work. The intensity of interest others expressed in the experience combined with the intensity of the experience itself seemed potentially volatile and dangerous to me. It all just seemed like too much too soon, and I eventually decided to suspend my work with cosmic consciousness and to concentrate instead on developing my understanding of hypnosis. In hindsight, I am rather glad I did. The intervening years were quite productive and very rewarding.

Over the next two decades I authored and co-authored several textbooks, book chapters, and journal articles on Ericksonian approaches to hypnosis and hypnotherapy, and also offered many professional training workshops and lectures on hypnosis and hypnotherapy as well. And whenever I thought about returning to my search for a way to create cosmic consciousness, I typically reminded myself that I still had a lot to learn about hypnosis before I could again move in that direction.

This pattern of defensive avoidance changed dramatically several years ago, when I was confronted by a series of professional, personal, and family crises. Just as I began dealing with one, something else would happen. The cumulative effect of these jarring consecutive emotional traumas was quite overwhelming and debilitating. My autonomic nervous system went into overdrive and stayed there. I became distracted by perseverative thoughts about the unresolved crises going on in my life, lost my appetite, was unable to sleep, unable to concentrate, and unable to relax. I felt anxious and stressed. All of my efforts to relax, to meditate, to use self hypnosis, and to redirect my thoughts toward the positive things in life proved fruitless. My condition threatened my ability to effectively carry out my responsibilities as a professor and a psychotherapist. I needed to get back on track and I needed to do it quickly.

As I pondered what to do about my situation one evening, I suddenly found myself thinking about an ex-student of mine named Helen. At first I did not understand why Helen had come to mind so forcefully, but eventually my thoughts about her led me back to the light, quite literally.

Fifteen years earlier, several years after her graduation and long after I had stopped my work on mystical consciousness, Helen had called me and asked for my help with her intense pain. She had cancer, untreatable terminal cancer. During our first session, I guided her

into a trance and told her simply that her unconscious mind could now use the openness of her trance state to provide those things she needed. Within a few minutes, she stiffened a bit, then smiled broadly and just sat there smiling for over 30 minutes.

Afterwards she explained that she had just been sitting there in a kind of blank waiting state when she began to feel surrounded by a warm light that became brighter and brighter and eventually became such an intensely brilliant light that the energy of it seemed to penetrate every cell in her body, at which point she could no longer tell where the light began and where she ended. She felt herself merge with the warm energy of that light, and then she "knew" that the light was everything around her, a vast unity of loving energy that is everything and everyone. She said that this "understanding" was followed by a feeling of overwhelming peace and by a realization that at that moment she was feeling no pain at all.

Helen was quite excited as she told me all of this afterwards and even cried a bit, apparently tears of happiness or joy. She said she was no longer afraid of death, and no longer afraid of her pain. I was later told that she continued to use trance on her own until her death a few months later.

Although I was fascinated and impressed by her experience at the time, I was not smart enough to put two and two together and to instantly realize that Dr Rodger was right ... that becoming immersed in an inner light is an effective pathway into a mystical state of mind. In fact, to be quite honest, Helen's experience did not remind me of my consciousness altering session with Dr Rodger at all. Instead, having previously set aside all thoughts about my work with cosmic consciousness, I merely bid Helen goodbye, said hello to my next client, and promptly forgot all about the somewhat miraculous event I had just witnessed.

As I began thinking about Helen's experience while in my "crisis mode", however, the similarity of her experience to my own experience with Dr Rodger suddenly became blatantly apparent. It had been right there in front of me the entire time! How could I have overlooked it? If you have ever torn your house apart looking for something, such as keys or glasses, and then found them lying out in the open on the kitchen counter right where you began searching, then you have some idea of how I felt. My ability to ignore the obvious stunned me. And to make matters worse, Helen was not the only example. As I thought more about it, I began remembering examples of other clients who had entered the light and been saved in some way.

For instance, I was once asked by a colleague from the rehabilitation unit of a local hospital to see a WWII veteran who had been severely injured when a kamikaze pilot slammed into the ship he was on. He was thrown backwards into the bulkhead of the ship by the explosion. The impact broke his back in several places and damaged his liver and kidneys. Over the next few years he went through many operations and ended up with so much scar tissue wrapped around the nerves and tissues of his abdomen and back that he was now experiencing excruciating pain and virtually continuous muscle spasms.

I was supposed to use hypnosis to help this man manage his pain, but after talking to him for a short time I discovered that he was a lay minister and that his church taught that hypnosis is the work of the devil. Accordingly, I simply asked him to close his eyes, to stop fighting the pain, and to just listen to my voice while I explained a few things to him. I then told him that he had a conscious mind and an unconscious mind and that his unconscious mind could find a way for him to experience relief from his pain if he asked it to do so and gave it a chance to do so in the right way at the right time for him. I said this many times in many different

ways and then I asked him if he understood and if he would agree to allow his unconscious to help him. He indicated that he would, opened his eyes, noted that he already felt a little better, and left with a smile on his face.

Two weeks later he arrived at our next appointment quite excited and obviously pleased. He stated that he was feeling much less pain than before but that, more importantly, he had experienced no pain at all for an entire afternoon. He also said that this had not happened to him in the 40 years since he had been injured.

He had been sitting in his back yard with his eyes closed, relaxing the way he had relaxed while listening to me talk during our first session. He asked his unconscious for help and then all of a sudden, "It seemed like the clouds parted, and I felt a brilliant ray of sunlight come down into or through me, and it was as if the hand of God reached down and touched my back and took the pain away". It took away more than his physical pain. It also took away his severe chronic depression and left him feeling more joyful and full of life than he had in years. He returned to his ministry with renewed faith, vigor, and intensity.

Remembering these events one after another enabled me to actually begin to see the light, to finally realize that immersion in light is a rapid and perhaps natural route into mystical experiences. Following this realization, I re-read Bucke's description of his own mystical episode in his classic book from 1900, *Cosmic Consciousness*, and wondered once again how I could have overlooked something so blatantly obvious. Bucke wrote that while riding home after an evening reading poetry with some friends, he suddenly and without warning, "found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame colored cloud. For an instant, he thought of fire, some sudden conflagration in the great city, the next he knew that the light was within himself. Directly afterwards came upon

him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe" (Bucke, 1900, p. 8).

I also vaguely remembered and eventually looked up the description offered by Bill Wilson (one of the founders of AA) regarding his own healing enlightenment. As I thought, "Bill" stated that, "Suddenly the room lit up with a great white light. I was caught up in an ecstasy which there are no words to describe" (quoted in Delbanco & Delbanco, 1955). Again, there it was, the light that leads to ecstasy and personal transformation.

Finally, I reread several collections of essays that had played a crucial and deciding role in the development of my belief that the loss of the Self is the cause of mystical experiences. I found, for example, that although Deikman (in Ornstein, 1973) did argue that mystical experiences are produced by renunciation or annihilation of the Self, he also stated that, "Liberated energy experienced as light may be the core sensory experience of mysticism," (p. 228). Similarly, after describing many techniques, including hypnosis, for the creation of "visionary experiences", Aldous Huxley stated that "The highest common factor, I think, in all these experiences is the factor of light" (presented in White, 1972, p. 47).

That evening I sat down, entered a mild self-hypnotic trance, began remembering my experience with Dr Rodger, and conjured up that same image of a bright light far off in the distance. As it got closer and closer I began to feel its energy, as I had before, until eventually that light surrounded me, entered me, and seemed to send spine tingling chills shooting through me like waves of soft electricity that expanded off into space in all directions. By that time, a chorus of sound that reminded me of the melding voices of a choir had blended with the energy surges I was already feeling.

The details of my subsequent experiences that night are not important here. The various descriptions of pure consciousness or spiritual enlightenment presented throughout this text provide an adequate account. The important thing is that I almost instantly began to feel much better and emerged from that experience with a renewed sense of calm contentment and a revived interest in developing ways to help others enter such states. The intensity of this disorienting consciousness alteration no longer worried or frightened me. Instead, it appealed to me as a potent indicator of a mind sweeping itself clean, transforming itself with a rush of clarity.

Unfortunately, at first, these experiences and insights simply switched my focus from "the loss of a sense of Self" to "immersions in light". Like a dog who has switched from chewing on and protecting one bone to chewing on another, I now began thinking that "light" was the one and only true answer. In spite of the fact that I had spent the past 30 years working within an Ericksonian framework which emphasizes individualization above all else, I immediately reverted to a "one-size-fits-all" approach. I began trying to immerse everyone in "light".

Not surprisingly, not everyone can see the light, not everyone likes the light, and not everyone needs the light. It did not take long for my clients to remind me that some people need or prefer sound, some prefer sensation, and some prefer a perceptual or conceptual immersion in perfection. People are not all alike. Light may predominate as an entry into a mystical state but it is not the only pathway.

A woman who had recently lost her daughter to suicide responded only to the imagined sound of a chorus of angels, not to light at all. She subsequently reported that as she became lost in the sound, she began to feel herself drifting along with it, and eventually thought she heard her daughter's voice among all the rest telling her that she was fine.

This woman emerged from the trance feeling soothed and reassured by the experience.

A man in his 50s who was consumed by anger and wracked by arthritic pain in every joint eventually responded to a suggested rush of tingling sensations throughout his entire body, after which he was able to become the heat of a roaring fire, and eventually the sound and sensation of a cool and gently flowing mountain stream. Afterwards, his anger diminished and his pain subsided.

An accountant in his late 30s who had developed serious allergic responses to an enormous variety of natural and man-made substances during a period of intense stress five years previously did not react to anything I suggested during our session together, but apparently, he did react to a post-hypnotic suggestion that his unconscious mind could provide him with a particularly pleasant experience sometime later that week. As he and his wife were driving to the grocery store, he was suddenly overwhelmed by the absolute beauty and perfection of the moment ... the sunshine, the fall colors, the smell of dry leaves, the quiet contentment of being loved, of loving ... all came together at once and connected him once again in a positive and comfortable way to the world around him. His allergic reactions diminished, became quite manageable, and eventually virtually disappeared.

These and other similar experiences helped me stop searching for the holy grail, for the one true approach, and enabled me to recognize what now seems blatantly obvious, that there probably are as many hypnotic routes into transpersonal or cosmic states of consciousness as there are people willing to experience such states. The key is that enlightenment occurs when there is an overwhelming immersion in a pleasurable sensation, perception or emotion. On the other hand, this typically only happens after the person has, for one reason or another, slipped into a trance state of mind, thus losing a sense of

Self and becoming a blank, rather empty or objective observer of events. In other words, as I first thought, the loss of a sense of Self does indeed play a vitally important role. It sets the stage. But the cosmic experience itself occurs when that state is used to create something more, something more intense and overwhelming than would occur otherwise.

How to Use Hypnosis to Create Cosmic Consciousness

Thanks to the clients and friends of mine who were quite willing to tell me what worked for them and what did not, I am now convinced that every commonly reported component of cosmic or mystical experiences (including the inconceivably brilliant light, the rush of almost orgasmic tingling sensations, the penetrating harmonies, the powerful emotion of awe or wonder, and the inevitable immersion in the perfection and oneness of all things) is a potential point of entry into that state of mind. It now seems obvious to me that experiencing any one of these aspects of cosmic consciousness can trigger all of the other aspects of that state of mind in a cascade of events that eventually leads to the full experience.

Each separate quality or dimension of the enlightenment experience involves an overwhelmingly intense level of neural activity in some part of the brain, such as the visual centers, the auditory centers, or the sensory systems – which seems to be capable of stimulating that same level of intense activity throughout the rest of the brain and body. For whatever reason, this intensity produces a profound depth of awareness and understanding that transcends all previous conscious constructs. It is as if the mind is washed clean by a rush of unspeakably intense sensations and emotions. What remains is like an unspoiled wilderness, a purity of thought, perception, and reaction that is uncontaminated by ordinary conscious ways of thinking and open to a direct and uncensored awareness of events.

Thus, the logic or rationale underlying the procedures presented here is really quite simple. To begin with, the loss of a sense of Self that is so frequently and universally associated with the occurrence of such mystical experiences actually is the development of a trance state. This "empty" and passively observant state of mind (hypnotic trance) is vitally important because it provides a reduced level of conscious interference and a correspondingly increased "suggestibility" or enhanced "imaginative involvement". These qualities, in turn, can then be used to alter perception, sensation, emotion, and thought in the direction of a mystical experience. Such modifications of sensation, perception and experience are, after all, the essence of hypnosis. Hypnotic trance is of value medically and therapeutically specifically because it can be used to alter perception and reaction. During a hypnotic trance, suggestions can be used to help subjects experience almost anything, from the imagined pleasure of floating on a warm sunlit cloud to the hallucinated comfort of stroking the soft fur of a purring cat.

Furthermore, these hypnotically produced changes in experience can create such vivid and complete imaginary simulations of the "real" thing that the end product may actually be experienced in the same way *as* the real thing. A hypnotically induced experience of being touched by something hot can create a startle reaction and even a change in the color of the skin. In some people it can actually create a blister. Similarly, a hypnotically induced experience of hearing a specific love song can create the same emotional and neurophysiological reactions as actually hearing that song. The parts of the brain involved in hearing actually fire at an increased rate when an imagined sound is "heard". This also applies to imagined sights, sensations, movements and emotions.

Hypnotically induced experiences seem real or compelling because they involve the activation or firing of the same neural circuitry as the

real-life event. When you "imagine" seeing something, the "seeing" part of your brain is activated. In fact, it engages in essentially the same pattern of activity that it would if it were actually seeing that thing. Similarly, when you imagine running, the parts of your brain involved in running are activated. There is even evidence to indicate that imagined practice of a physical skill, such as shooting a basketball, significantly improves mastery of that skill and that imagined exercise can actually strengthen a muscle to some small degree.

Accordingly, the central proposition of this book is that when we use hypnotic suggestions to create the kinds of thoughts and sensations that typically occur during a mystical state of enlightenment, we are creating essentially the same neurological, physiological, and experiential effects as the "real" thing. In other words, a clearly imagined mystical experience should be comparable to, perhaps even indistinguishable from, one that occurs for any other reason.

A calmly focused trance can be used to create an imaginary immersion in a brilliant white light, an angelic choir, a vibratory surge of sensation, or even a feeling of a cellular connection to the life force of every living creature on earth. The end result of such hypnotically induced phenomena is a close approximation physiologically and experientially of a "genuine" mystical event.

Stated simply:

1. There is a consistent, holistic set of sensations, perceptions, and cognitions associated with "mystical", "peak", or "spiritual" experiences.
2. The open-minded imaginative involvement of hypnotic trance can be used to create specific sensations, perceptions, and cognitions.
3. Therefore, to create "mystical", "peak", or "spiritual" enlightenment experiences, use hypnotic suggestions to

> immerse the person in an imagined set of intense sensations, perceptions, and cognitions that are similar to those of any typical mystical, peak, or spiritual enlightenment experience.

This simple three-part statement provides the rationale for this entire book. Unfortunately, just because the underlying rationale is simple, this does not mean that the concepts and procedures used to attain the desired outcome also are simple. Because people differ from one another in so many ways, there is no one "right" way to accomplish the goal desired. Accordingly, this book demonstrates a wide variety of somewhat generic approaches and invites the reader to peruse the options.

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Chapter 9
Summary of *Mind Games* by Robert Masters and Jean Houston

Mind Games, published in 1972, is a "must read" for anyone wanting to become a practitioner in the field of the hypnotic induction of spiritual experience. The book is divided into four smaller books, each one a cycle of hypnosis experiments, called games, meant to be done by a group of people, called players. The authors say it is essential that the group start at Book One and work through the games sequentially, since the later hypnosis games use the experiences and skills developed in the earlier games. Most of the games were devised and tested at the authors' Foundation for Mind Research. The order of the games, they say, has been carefully thought out on the basis of a great deal of experience. "The average person is able to play, and to benefit from playing. Research has proved this, as it has proved that the mind games really do work." (Robert Masters and Jean Houston, *Mind Games: The Guide to Inner Space* [New York: Viking Press, 1972], 5)

As a historical note, the book *Mind Games* was the inspiration for John Lennon's 1973 solo album *Mind Games*. Gary Tillery, in his book *The Cynical Idealist: A Spiritual Biography of John Lennon* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2009), writes:

> By means of the mind games in the book, participants could free themselves from negative attitudes and inhibitions and become more creative, more confident, and more mentally adventurous. In short, they could become more fully realized human beings.
>
> The training ignited Lennon's imagination. He saw it leading to a cadre of mentally liberated people infiltrated throughout a less-enlightened society — "mind guerrillas" working toward a higher purpose than their contemporaries and having a positive influence on them. To him, expanding legions of mentally liberated people would inevitably build the level of agreement necessary to bring into existence the peaceful society that was his goal.

At the beginning of Book Four the authors of *Mind Games* say:

> In the games to come, there will be the possibility of extremely powerful experiences occurring, including some which may resemble or be the same as those traditionally called "satori," "samadhi," "nirvana," "cosmic consciousness," "mystical experience," and others apprehended as experiences of "ultimate reality," and of the "integral level" of the psychedelic experience. (p. 168)

Unfortunately, as seminal as the book is, it contains no overall guide to the games. The contents page simply lists Book One, Book Two, Book Three, and Book Four with no listing of the games in each book. *Mind Games* has instructions and hypnosis scripts for playing the games, but very little explanation as to the nature of the games, why a game is included, why it is placed at its particular spot in the sequence, or testimony from people who have played it. Masters and Houston write, "When published, the authors' book *New Ways of Being*, will detail the experimental work underlying the mind games, and will give much

further information of value to guides and players." (p. 233) As far as I can tell, such a book was never published.

In order to give you an overall understanding of the structure of the mind game cycles, I am going to fill in the Table of Contents with details about the games from my own notes. These notes are very abbreviated and, though they give an overall understanding of the games, they do not give anything like a full-on feeling for the games as described in the book.

All of these activities are done in hypnotic trance. Many of them are done in what the authors call AMP, accelerated mental processing, a phenomenon of hypnotic time distortion. There are states in which mental processing occurs with extreme rapidity. During a near-death experience, for example, people often say that their whole life flashed in front of their eyes. The psychologists Linn Cooper and Milton Erickson learned how to modulate the subjective passage of time and wrote a book about it called *Time Distortion in Hypnosis* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1959). I remember reading a case years ago when I was in graduate school. A young man needed to make money playing guitar in clubs in order to finance his college education but was so busy studying that he didn't have time to practice. As a result, his guitar playing was getting worse and worse. Erickson hypnotized him and set ten minutes of clock time equal to two hours of mental practice time. Since research shows that for sensory-motor tasks mental practice is almost as good as physical practice, the young man soon recovered his song repertoire, using only ten minutes of clock time a day.

BOOK ONE

1. Hearing sensuous music with the whole surface of your body. Pleasure and sensitivity increase until the music is experienced with rapture.

2. Music experienced with all of the senses: seeing, tasting, smelling, touching the music.

3. An Alice game (after Alice in Wonderland). Body becomes heavy, then light; small, then huge; made of rock, then metal, then wood, then becomes a tree; porous so that wind blows through you; you are the wind.

4. A shamanic shape-shifting game. Body becomes a cat; feeling all the agility, sensuousness, and purring contentment of being a cat.

5. Romancing the stone (my title): Players in a circle meditating on a stone in the center. Be the stone, then return to yourself. Pass the stone and each player puts physical pain and emotional pain into the stone, which is then bathed. Pass the stone again and each player puts pleasure, desire, and love into the stone. Meditate on the stone. Become the stone, purged of pain, full of pleasure, desire, and love, and something of the essence of all the other players.

6. A revealing symbol is evoked from the unconscious for each body part.

7. Concentration on a plant so that awareness narrows to just the plant. The plant is taken away, but the group imagines that it is still there. The plant is returned. Tuning in to the consciousness of the plant. Being open to receive messages. Being the plant.

8. Learning to remember vividly with all the senses. Remembering something from three years ago, from when you were nine or ten, remembering your earliest happy memory, then back to being an infant, if you can.

9. Two people in trance looking at each other and exchanging identities.

10. Collective art-work canvas created by the group with one member after another contributing. The canvas is expressive of the group consciousness.

11. Creation of an autonomous Group Spirit though rhythmic breathing, chanting OM, and suggestions for group oneness. One person is appointed to ask and receive answers from the Group Spirit.

12. Impact of changes to time and distance (derived from the work of Bernard Aaronson). 1. Speeding up and slowing down of a metronome that the players experience as always beating at 60 cycles a minute. 2. Suggestions for increases in depth perception, vividness of colors, and clarity of forms. With a speeded-up metronome, players feel euphoric and active, with a slowed metronome they feel lazy and lethargic. With increases in depth perception they can feel very positive emotions and sometimes have something like a religious-type experience.

13. Cleaning the doors of perception. Suggestions are given that the experiences to follow are novel and new. Feeling water, stone, sponge, fruit, bread. Your hand is not your hand, it's just a hand in front of you that feels nothing. Now it is becoming more and more sensitized until its feelings are exquisite.

14. Mirror work alone at home. In trance looking at oneself in the mirror. Ask repeatedly, who have I been? Address and question the image that arises. Who am I? Who will I be?

15. Two people, each meditating on the face of the other. One asks, who am I? The other observes changes in the face of the one asking the question.

16. Rite of liberation. An Initiate faces a man and a woman. There is a prolonged trance induction. The guide says, "We take action to restore your power and freedom to you." The man and woman take the initiate's hands to restore full sensation to the body. They touch eyes to restore freshness of vision. Etc.

17. Meditation on the self as a series of concentric circles. Each circle as it is encountered transforms into a symbol of the self. Moving in toward the center of the circle.

BOOK TWO

1. Suggestions to keep a dream diary. Now, in trance, you will begin to dream. After that dream you will remember a dream that was important to you when you were younger. You will dream a clarifying dream tonight when you go to bed about the dream you just remembered.

2. Eliciting vivid images: Going down into a cavern. Going down a whirlpool at the bottom of the cavern. You are at the bottom of a hugely deep rock cylinder in a circle with powerful symbols surrounding it. A section of the wall opens to a richly detailed scene from your early life. Another section of wall opens to show a crystal ball. A fetus floats in the crystal. You see its entire life unfolding before you. After it is grown you may realize that this was you and your life.

3. Exploring creative and individually tailored ways to induce and deepen altered states of consciousness.

4. Visionary anthropology – the exploration of imaginal worlds: Becoming round and flying with immense speed to another world or another dimension where you encounter plants and animals and any intelligent beings. You enquire about their music and art, their laws, customs, scientific knowledge, philosophies and religions. You bring back pieces of that other world, such as songs, inventions, and mathematical discoveries.

5. Time tunnel: Going back in time to a particular historic or prehistoric locale and exploring it. Or going back to a past life and reliving episodes from that life.

6. Communicating with an alien life form more intelligent that any human being. Sending it love and good will and receiving these feelings back. Being open to receive a message from this super-intelligent, friendly being.

7. Musical images in the accelerated mental state: in AMP time, visiting a small café, ordering a sandwich, listening to the musicians on stage playing songs you have never heard before. You will try to learn the songs so that you can sing them when you return. Or listening to a new short story being read.

8. Feeling the sensory, emotional, and symbolic changes of the seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter.

9. Training in using a self-selected trigger word, which also describes an image such as a butterfly, to self-induce and deepen trance. Use of those who can achieve somnambulism to assist those who are slow to achieve deep trance.

10. A more intense shape-shifting game: One after another each member of the group transforms into an unspecified animal related to the evolution of humanity. The group discusses what animal form was taken and the depth of the transformation.

11. What to do in tough situations during inner space explorations: At the edge of an abyss, realize you can float through the air to the bottom or command the abyss to fill with water so that you can swim across. Attacked by a sea monster, realize that it is an enchanted princess. Make magical gestures to counteract the spell. Endangered by a hungry mountain lion, conjure food for it or shrink it to the size of a kitten. Realize that it is your imaginal world and you can change it so that danger is averted. (I learned this from a Jean Houston tape years ago and it has saved me from a lot of scary situations.)

12. Dream games: 1. A member who has written down a dream and an interpretation goes into trance and is told to have another dream with the same interpretation but different characters and circumstances. The two dreams and their interpretations are compared. The same is done with other members of the group. 2. Dream a complex, significant dream veiled in its meaning by much symbolism. The dream is recorded and amnesia for the dream is induced. Listen to a stranger's voice read an unfamiliar dream (the recorded dream), then dream a simple straightforward dream that shows the meaning of that unfamiliar dream clearly. 3.The group will dream dreams that night or the next that will help improve the progress of the group.

13. Smashing of the enslaving idols: A glass wall separates you from full experience of the world. Pick up a sledgehammer and smash through the glass, breaking it into little pieces. Symbolic forms that contain attitudes and ideas that enslave you rise up before you now. Smash them with your sledgehammer, too, destroying their power to restrain your freedom.

14. Listening to music in AMP time so that its duration feels eternal, without beginning or end, and its intense sensuous pleasure is wholly ecstatic. Learn that your capacity for pleasure is beyond anything you have ever experienced and that it can endure for longer than you ever thought possible. Likewise, the duration of your pain can be made to feel short and its intensity can be greatly diminished.

15. Creation of a collective consciousness and an independent entity arising out of it, the Group Spirit. Players merge with it as much as possible in rapport and communicate questions and answers. Players are told that in the next game they will call forth the Group Spirit and try to see it.

16. Creation of a collective consciousness in trance. The Group Spirit emerges from it and becomes autonomous. The collective consciousness is dissolved but the entity is still in existence. The group members endeavor to lend it energy and substance until they can see, hear, and touch it. Questions and guidance for the group. The collective consciousness is created again, and the Group Spirit dissolved into it. (Derived from Tibetan procedures for creating a *thought-form*, a *tulpa*. See also the book *Conjuring Up Philip: An Adventure in Psychokinesis*, by Iris M. Owen and Margaret Sparrow [New York: Harper and Row, 1976].)

17. Creation of a group consciousness in trance. A canvas is created by the group, one member after another contributing. It is expressive of the group consciousness and works toward a symbol of the current development of the group. When finished it is compared with the artwork produced in the first Mind Game cycle.

18. Meditation on concentric circles of the self. As each circle is encountered the player asks, who am I? A symbolic image emerges as a response to the question. The center is the deepest symbol. Symbols are drawn or described. The group discusses how things have changed from the same exercise done in cycle one.

BOOK THREE

1. Temple sleep. Dream in a trance sleep of a god or entity who will help you.

2. Encounter with the "Wise Old Man" archetype.

3. Mutual hypnosis. Two people hypnotize each other, are simultaneously in trance together, commune with each other about what they are experiencing, and determine what in the exploration is actually being shared.

4. Encounter with four guides who are archetypal symbolic forms:
   Swallowed by a giant crocodile.
   Ancient jewel encrusted turtle takes you
   to a beautiful white stallion.
   An enormous black cat with golden eyes.
   Three humanlike figures with the heads of hawks.
   They have fearsome, piercing eyes.

5. Create stories while you are in time distortion accelerated mental processing.

6. Visit two rituals with music, designed to encounter God, one in a primitive jungle and one with a group of monks.

7. Becoming your ideal body image. Becoming your personified artistic talent. Meeting an art teacher who can instruct you.

8. Becoming a seer and predicting the short-term future.

9. More and deeper mutual hypnosis.

10. Body expansion to an enormous size. Contraction to a minute size. Self a cell in the cosmic whole. Becoming the whole. The interrelatedness of everything. Exteriorizing images with eyes open. Encountering an alien dimension with alien intelligences. Visionary anthropology – bringing back songs, dances, etc.

11. Seeing oneself in death. Meditating on what was left undone, how wrongs could be righted. Awakening to life and the life force within.

12. The group creates a work of art expressive of the current group consciousness.

13. 24-hour fasting and isolation to consolidate trance capabilities, game experiences, and life experiences.

14. Meditation on concentric circles moving inward to the center. Each circle has a symbol of the self.

BOOK FOUR

1. Going down through colors to a velvet black void, resting there, and returning up through the colors.

2. Preparation for mystical experience. Identity dissolves in the oneness of pure being starting from a shade tree. Identity dissolves in the oneness of pure being starting from music. Experiencing the ecstasy and rapture of oneness with pure being.

3. Speaking in tongues. Glossolalia.

4. Mutual hypnosis with two or three people. Groups are given one hour of clock time using time distortion AMP (accelerated mental processing) to make the exploration of new dimensions of human intimacy seem extremely long. Discussion is held afterward. Participants focus in part on the use of shared trance with friends and lovers, in psychotherapy and marriage counseling.

5. At the bottom of a cylinder. A white/gold light grows brighter and brighter around you. You merge with the light, becoming the light. The light becomes a column of white and gold fire, leaping upward. It subsides down to the bottom and you become a human body again. You focus your consciousness on the energy at the base of your spine. It begins to rise up your spine, but you restrain it to a slow movement. When you do release it, it surges up into your brain.

6. Two days of fasting, isolation, and meditation. Meditation in trance on the nature of ultimate reality. How can ultimate reality be known? Is there a point where the self ceases to be? What happened to that self while it is not

aware of itself? If there is union of the not-self with God or ultimate reality, what could be the basis for such a claim?

7. In nature: In deep trance, open your eyes and see everything in a novel and new way. Now experience it as an eternal, timeless, mythic, and sacred space. Savor the full beauty and uniqueness. Feel your rootedness in nature, a part of the whole. Eat, drink, and be nourished by the simplicity. Make preparations for spending the night. Meditate on the two days of fasting. As you look at the fire, experience the full meaning of the history of fire for humanity. Then earth, air, and water. A priestess invokes the power of the moon. Sleep and dream about the hidden forces within that can help you fulfill your goals.

8. All of the following are in AMP distortions of time. First, a flood of multisensory images of pleasurable experience building to sensory overload and a resultant bliss, rapture, and ecstasy. Then re-experiencing the significant events of your life with the power to understand and change them. Next the experiences of the first two segments are translated into symbols and the symbols may be woven into a symbolic drama, a myth or legend, that reveals new insights to you. Finally, as the trance deepens you pass through realms of collective archetypes and universal symbols, through the primary energies of creation, to ultimate reality, the Ground of Being.

9. Group Spirit: Merging consciousness with the Group Spirit. The group gives it location, energy, and form and the members commune with it as they are best able. One by one the players stand in front of the entity and request inspiration to celebrate the occasion. Then they sleep and

dream of the Group Spirit, entering into conversation during the dream. Document the experience. If one person feels deeply merged with the Group Spirit, that person becomes the channel for communication with it. Dissolution of the Spirit.

10. Players create in trance a work of art that is an expression of their memory of the Group Spirit, each player contributing to the canvas in succession. Afterwards they view this work, and all the individual works from the last game, and discuss their meaning.

11. Mutual hypnosis pairs share a trance game in which they try to fathom the secrets of the Holy Grail, or the Philosopher's Stone, or the Great Pyramid, or an ancient lost civilization, or life on another planet, or life in another dimension. This is done with one hour of clock time in AMP. After the hour, there is another hour of clock time in AMP where the two journey together to the deepest levels, the most profound depths, to encounter the cosmic, universal, and eternal aspects of ultimate reality. After trance termination group members are instructed to write a report of what happened, without consulting the other member of the pair, for later discussion and comparison.

12. Second session of speaking in tongues, glossolalia.

13. Self-liberation. In the deepest trance possible, see yourself caught in a spider's web. These are the lines and threads that inhibit and control you, that entrap, cripple, and impair you. Some have weakened over time. Break them now. You know that you are free in your body, in your mind, and in your accomplishments. Other people have confused you about this, but you now know deeply and completely that

you are free. Knowing this, strike out and smash those lines that bind you. If there are any lines left, follow each one to its source, understand it, destroy its power, and smash the line linking it to you.

14. In a deep trance you experience an underground cavern, a sacred space lit by moonlight. Instructions are given about preparation for playing the culminating mind game. During the following week: eat only a little food each day, no intoxicating substances, no sexual excitement, maintain emotional serenity. For about an hour daily go into as deep a trance as you can. Go beyond images to a profound and expanded awareness. Afterward don't think about the content of these trances. For the day before the final game go into isolation, eat lightly, drink only water, sleep as much as you need, induce trances.

15. Symbolic death and rebirth: Very deep trance with meditation on concentric circles moving inward to the center, each circle containing a symbol of the self. Repeating the question, who am I? In the center is the deepest and most comprehensive self-symbol yet realized. Becoming one with this symbol and knowing that you are about to die and be reborn. The symbol gets smaller and smaller. When it disappears, you will know that your old self has died. Now the symbol goes out and the old self is extinguished. When rebirth occurs, the guide invites the players to open their eyes and behold the world as it is in the moment of being reborn, to look, touch, move about, and savor.

In 1970 Dr. Houston hypnotized *Time* magazine researcher Clare Mead, who had a mystical experience. One of the things Dr. Houston did in the session was to use the symbolic death and rebirth cycle. Ms. Mead chose a star in the night sky to symbolize her life.

> Gradually I was able to relinquish my hold as I watched it disappear, leaving only vast, empty blackness. … Then, still under Dr. Houston's direction, I made an enormous effort to revive my poor star. At first, I thought to myself that this would probably occur as the gradual brightening of a star in the blackness. But instead, and all of a sudden, I saw the sky suddenly flash into total, blinding white light. … I knew with incredible clarity that life is the victor in the struggle against death, not in the sense of an afterlife in a far-away heaven, but in the certainty that life is eternal, despite death. I was overcome with the joy of this truth, and I wanted to run out on the street and shout it to the New Yorkers plodding homeward in the gray smog from their dull downtown offices, unaware that a sea of beauty, life and love surrounded and sustained them. ("Mysticism in the Laboratory," *Time* magazine, October 5, 1970)

Many of the Mind Games depend on deep trance phenomena such as accelerated mental processing, group hypnosis, hallucination of alien worlds, symbolic communication with the unconscious mind, encounters with archetypes, transformations of body-image, etc.

For those who have not experienced it, the transformation of reality that trance can produce is hard to believe. Surely these trance games cannot do what they claim to do. The authors are making all this stuff up. Or it only works for some people but not for an average person, someone hard to hypnotize. The authors address this question:

> Some players will always learn less quickly, and some players will be slow in learning to respond to deepening suggestions. A certain number will demonstrate considerable resistance to going into trance at all. But every player, with persistence and training, eventually should be able to

> learn to achieve altered states and to go deep enough to have most of the experiences which the mind games make possible. (p. 80–81)

This is an extremely important fact, if true. It means that trance-induced spiritual experience is within the reach of almost all human beings. It is simply a matter of training. Unfortunately, the authors never detail any of the research that might back up their assertion, although they say that they have done such work at their Foundation for Mind Research.

Chapter 10
Kerry Goldstein – Using Hypnosis to Encourage Mystical Experiences

Editor: Kerry Goldstein MA is a mental health counselor who works in Portland Oregon. He wrote this paper while he was taking courses at the California Institute of Integral Studies.

Kerry Goldstein

Some aspects of the mystical states that are part of near-death and psychedelic experience can be re-experienced under hypnosis. Also, some aspects of a mystical experience can be produced by hypnosis without any kind of modeling of an original experience.

Mystical consciousness can be broken down into a seven-category typology as done by Pahnke, W. (1969). These categories can exist together or separately: A sense of unity, either internal or external; insightful knowledge or illumination about existence, combined with a feeling of certainty; a sense of being outside of time and space; a sense of sacredness; a deeply felt positive mood, characterized by peace, love, or bliss; the ability to hold paradoxes easily; and a sense that the whole experience is quite beyond words (Pahnke, 1969, p. 71-75).

This paper is concerned with establishing that many of these aspects of mystical experience have already been produced via hypnosis.

In a study by Pahnke (1963), where an analysis was done between the relationship of a psychedelic drug and a mystical state, he found that the subjects who received psilocybin had phenomena which were indistinguishable from, if not identical with, certain categories defined by our typology of mysticism (p. 234). This drug effect took place within a religious context (a Good Friday service). The control group that received the placebo did not have any reported mystical consciousness, although one member of the control group did experience a sense of sacredness.

Reproductions of mystical drug states have been accomplished using hypnosis. Fogel and Hoffer (1962) were able to reproduce D-Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD-25) effects in a subject who had had previous hypnotic work with Dr. Fogel. Three weeks after her LSD-25 session Dr. Fogel hypnotized her and was able to create parallel LSD-25 effects, including pupil dilation and unusual perceptual changes (p. 14). The subject's experience included a feeling of being very close to God (p. 15).

Using posthypnotic suggestion Hastings et al. (2000) were able to produce in two groups of participants (twelve participants total) the effects of taking MDMA/Ecstasy. All of the participants in the study had previously used MDMA. On a scale of 1 – 7, seven being the highest similarity to their previous MDMA experiences, the mean was 5.18 for group one and 5 for group two. One of the participants scored the similarity as an eight, after sixty minutes. This person had taken MDMA about four times previously. Subjective phenomenological qualities were also rated on a scale of 1 – 7. Many of the qualities that were rated can be seen as part of a mystical consciousness. The mean for some of the qualities are as follows: Inner light 5; increased empathy 4.92; transcendence of self 4.82; enhanced

self insight 4.82; unity, sense of the divine 4.55; euphoric, happy 4.55; heart opening, loving and caring 4.71. In this study 75% of the participants judged the experience as very similar to or identical with a previous MDMA experience (p. 10). Many of these mystical aspects were not expected to occur.

Hypnosis has also been used to produce and reproduce Near-Death experiences. Van Quekelberghe, Göbel, and Hertweck (1995) attempted to simulate a near-death experience (NDE). By using hypnosis and a few additional techniques they were able to produce such experiences relatively quickly. They judged that their simulations may sometimes be difficult to differentiate from real NDEs. Some of the subjects reported strong ecstatic feelings, some spiritual visions, and some even anger or sadness when asked to re-enter the still-living body (p. 163). None of the subjects in the study had had an NDE previously (p. 153). There have been other studies that have used hypnotic techniques to recall NDEs rather than to produce them directly, such as those by Janice Holden in 1993 and Holden & Machovec in 1996.

Hypnosis has been used to directly produce expanded states of consciousness. In a study by Aaronson (1967a), different posthypnotic suggestions were given to create perceptual shifts in distance and depth. By using the suggestion of expanded depth, the subject was happy, energetic and "…felt that in some way he had been added to. He was aware of the relationships among things and people and felt that he could understand what he experienced on a very deep level (p. 205)." The study was then replicated with a different subject. The new subject had a similar experience. The subject talked about how "everything around him seemed to have been shaped into a world of super-reality and unspeakable beauty." The subject was described as euphoric, and in trying to describe the experience said, "I feel dumbstruck and preposterous in trying to describe this perceptual miracle (Aaronson, 1967b, p. 249)." Banyai (1984) was

able to produce a hyper-alert ecstatic state. A description of the state is as follows: "…suddenly, I had a very strong and pleasant feeling … a feeling of completeness…. It's hard to express, but it was a peak experience…complete peace…. It was quite unique (Banyai, 1984, p. 175)."

Just because many parts of a mystical experience have been produced, do those parts, if combined together in an individual, equal a mystical experience? Only those who have had mystical experiences will be able to answer the above question, by knowing for themselves how close the re-experience is to the original state. Walker makes a similar argument saying, "Just trying to imitate the characteristics of an experience that is designated mystical doesn't mean that the person has achieved the original mystical state (Walker, 1998, p. 82)." Walker is speaking about a slightly different context.

Hypnosis is a way in which an individual can get in touch with their full resources. Through hypnosis perceptual filters can be altered and removed. By altering those perceptual filters, it may be possible to achieve a full mystical state. That idea seems to be supported in that "many religious activities bear considerable similarity to the characteristics of hetero-hypnosis." (Matheson, 1986, p.112)

If hypnosis is used to produce or reproduce mystical experiences, there are some elements to consider. Mystical experiences frequently occur during times of extreme stress. It is possible that recollection can also recall the stress. In order to address this concern, a hypnotic induction could be crafted similar to the one used by Holden & Machovec (1993). This suggestion encourages the subject to remain healthy and to achieve a state of painless comfort. Later, in 1996, Holden did a hypnotic recall of NDEs and found that overall, the process had a quite positive effect on the subjects' sense of emotional well-being (p. 278).

In this paper it has been shown that drug effects can be reproduced by hypnosis. For some of the participants those reproduced effects have been very close to, if not just as real as, the drug effect itself. In addition to drug effects, other experiences that included mystical aspects have been produced indirectly. This evidence alone makes it plausible to think that aspects of mystical experience can be produced directly by hypnosis. None of the studies mentioned here specifically targeted the production of mystical aspects of consciousness. They aimed to reproduce the effects of LSD and MDMA and to examine hypnotically produced changes in consciousness made by simulations of NDEs and distortions of distance and depth perception.

The intention in these studies wasn't to produce mystical elements; rather the mystical elements were a side effect of the induction that was targeting something else. In the MDMA experience, the hypnotic suggestions were done in a group to achieve an MDMA like experience (although parts of the suggestions were tailored for the individuals). In the LSD-25 experience they were attempting to create an LSD-25 experience, not any mystical elements. If a hypnotic induction were designed to specifically target the mystical elements desired, from the evidence we have seen, it seems that it could easily be achieved.

Here is a report by subject GF on a spontaneous mystical experience and then its recreation via self-hypnosis:

> I began to notice a most pleasant feeling rising upwards into my head. Perceptions of everything around me shifted and changed. The energy found my eyes and seemed to radiate through them, forcing them to smile, which caused everything I saw to take on a brilliant glow. Sounds, once just a part of the background, sang with a crisp voice in my body. I felt an immense comfort. Colors began to connect

with me, vibrating with depth and feeling. This allowed me the most intense range of emotions, all within a background of complete joy and security. My soul seemed to open up, allowing an experience of free connection to all that was around me. I knew things like I had never known them before. Whatever I focused on I accepted with a profound loving embrace. After a while this experience began to die down and the world returned to its former state.

Afterwards I began to awaken to just how drastically my experience can shift depending on the state I am in. I started to use self-hypnosis to purposefully move into a different state of consciousness. I analyzed the qualities of the above experience and began to alter my internal state to bring out those qualities. To my great joy I have had a wonderful amount of success in recapturing that peak experience. Sometimes I have been able to create parts of the experience with even more intensity than the original.

I relaxed and went back to the memory of the experience. While remembering, I noted specific sensory qualities that were different from my normal state. I did this for every sense linked to the state and I did it until I thought I understood all the sensory qualities that were different. I then relaxed and began consciously creating each of the qualities from the mystical state using self-hypnosis. Once I had one quality created I would then move to the next, and experience both qualities at the same time. I would stay with this combined experience for a while before moving on to add another quality. By staying with the experience, I was able to fuse the two qualities into one aspect. In that way I prevented the entire state from being too many chunks of information for me to keep in mind at one time. Once all the qualities were combined in my experience, I would then match the state to the memory of my original

experience. If there were differences, I would begin to add those in the same manner. This process was very rewarding, but it did not allow me to re-experience the state the first time I did it. However, with practice I was able to experience the mystical state once again. I am hoping that, with some training, the process of reproducing mystical states will become common place and will allow individuals to gain more immediate access to their full range of possible peak experiences.

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Chapter 11
Paul Sacerdote – Applications of Hypnotically Elicited Mystical States to the Treatment of Physical and Emotional Pain

Editor: This is an article by Dr. Paul Sacerdote taken from *The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, vol. 25, no. 4 (1977), pp. 309–24, written while he worked at the Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center in New York City. Dr. Sacerdote had both a PhD and an MD from the University of Turin, Italy, and was the president of the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis from 1977 to 1979. He published over thirty papers on hypnosis and was most interested in the use of hypnosis for the relief of patients in pain and terminal illness. Much of what is presented in this paper is based on the work of Bernard Aaronson. For a fuller Aaronson bibliography, see the chapter in this book called "A Collection of Other Methods."

Dr. Sacerdote

Abstract: Mystical states by-pass usual sensory perception and logical thinking. They often represent the ultimate goal of long apprenticeships in Eastern or Western monastic

practices which stress self-discipline and meditation; or they correlate with sudden religious conversions. While interest has also been revived in mystical experiences stimulated by hallucinogens within the appropriate physical, intellectual, and emotional environment, less attention has been paid to those mystical experiences which appear spontaneously during hypnosis and Transcendental Meditation. The present author facilitates the unleashing of mystical experiences by using hypnotic approaches specifically aimed at altering space and time perceptions. Case presentations illustrate the methodologies for guiding receptive subjects to mystical states with the aim of relieving or correcting organic and functional painful syndromes unresponsive to other interventions. The probable biopsychological processes are discussed.

The use of hypnosis in medicine, clinical psychiatry, and psychology has gradually extended from simple approaches aimed at reducing symptoms through direct or indirect suggestions, to the introduction of hypnoanalytic techniques (e.g., age regression, dreams, etc.) to the application of ego-psychology and of transactional analysis, to the facilitation or reinforcement of behavior modification techniques, and to the utilization of abreaction. Valuable results obtained through these various approaches to hypnotherapy have at least one common denominator: intensified transference and countertransference which almost invariably develop with successful hypnotization and continued hypnotherapy. Few clinicians, however, have utilized those perceptual alterations that are such an integral part of subjective hypnotic experience. This may seem incongruous, since the patient himself often spontaneously reports such experiences: his body or part of his body feels very heavy or very light or larger or smaller, or he has lost awareness of part or all of his body. Similarly, he may report having lost track of time, having his mind go blank, having lost touch with spatial reality, or having experienced floating

or sinking sensations. Often, he may simply recognize a relaxation more profound than any experienced before.

These and other changes, whether spontaneous or unwittingly stimulated by suggestions leading to sensory isolation, are enough to suggest that perceptual distortion may be an integral part of hypnosis (see Gill & Brenman, 1959). The modifications of ego-image, mood, and attitude which often accompany the changes in perception would appear to be potentially useful in therapy. Many therapists, however, are probably incapable of subjectively experiencing such phenomena because their own upbringing has emphasized "reality" and discouraged the recognition of "abnormal" experiences; they have become deaf and blind to any suggestion of unreality. I find it natural that behavioral therapists, trained and indoctrinated in the use of the systematic techniques of experimental psychology, tend, when using hypnosis, to avoid the unfamiliar seas of unusual perceptions and of mystical experiences. But even psychoanalysts, so thoroughly trained to understand how dreams distort or translate reality, often fail to recognize or utilize spontaneous mystical experiences. They refuse to resonate effectively with their patients' parataxic distortions [misperceptions of others based on personal problems] and with corresponding parts of their own egos. Generally, we all have become accustomed, since childhood, to feeling comfortable in the awareness of the "passage of time"; in the concepts of past, present, and future; in the position of our bodies within space. We function as if our existence and the relationships and dimensions of things and creatures within space and time were independent of subjective personal experience. Thus, when, as therapists, we avoid involvement with anything that cannot be understood in logical terms within a well-organized experiential world, we put ourselves out of reach of those patients who have needs for at least temporary respite from a world that overwhelms them physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

Traditional religious and para-religious movements (including American versions of Zen Buddhism, Transcendental Meditation, etc.), drug-cults, and psychotherapies that emphasize sensory awareness have been offering to the multitudes expectations of religious, mystical, or magical discoveries, often tinted with a strong touch of the mysterious wisdom of the Orient.

If we compare subjective experiences of people trained in Transcendental Meditation with the experiences spontaneously reported by good hypnotic Ss, we find similarities if not identity: only individual idiosyncrasies or different atmospheres and expectations within which the experiences occur seem to differentiate one from the other. This is hardly surprising, as the methodologies often used for eliciting states of Transcendental Meditation differ little from the progressive relaxation and eye-fixation techniques often used for hypnotic induction. Even the mantra looks suspiciously similar to that not-too-well-defined sound which Meares (1960) teaches subjects or patients in the induction of individual or group hypnosis. Meares reports that patients exposed to such simple experiences spontaneously recover from emotional illnesses without suggestions, systematic catharsis, hypnoanalytic insights, or behavioral manipulations. It is possible that some patients need to experience – even if for only a limited period of time – states of feeling and nonthinking which differ from the everyday perception of reality. For every person seeking understanding and relief from emotional stresses through the ministrations of a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or psychiatric social worker, there are thousands willing to utilize alcohol, sedatives, tranquilizers, psychedelic substances, stimulants – or the suggestive atmosphere of Transcendental Meditation or massive religious revivals.

Mystical Experiences Through Hypnosis

For the purpose of this paper, mystical states are defined and operationally described as states of ecstasy, rapture, and trance. The experiencing subject finds himself perceptually, emotionally, and cognitively immersed in oceanic, universal feelings; i.e., in direct intuitive or supernatural communion with the universe or with a superior being. Visual (lights, colors, shapes), auditory (music), olfactory, and other sensations are often part of the experience, but the mystical states by-pass ordinary sensory perceptions and logical understanding. Therefore, they cannot easily be described in terms of everyday reality. They are, by definition, ineffable – beyond verbal expression. In spite of these "inborn" difficulties of communication, patients usually attempt and partially succeed in giving some ideas of perceptual, emotional, and cognitive experiences which can only be described as mystical.

As this is a clinical paper, no useful purpose would be served by attempting to catalogue hypnotically elicited, mystical experiences along Fischer's (1971) continuum in his interesting "A cartography of the ecstatic and meditative states: The experimental and experiential feature of a perception-hallucination continuum are considered." (Incidentally, this cartography does not include hypnotic states!) Nor would the methods which I am about to describe or my patients' experiences be clarified if I were to spell them out in terms of Zen Buddhism or other religious or philosophical terminology.

I find it of some use, however, to accept Aaronson's (1971) distinctions between an "introvertive mystical experience" and an "extrovertive mystical experience." The former culminates in the subjective experience of "nothingness" – the absolute void. The latter tends to expand the person's awareness to unlimited, universal experiences. To facilitate introvertive mystical experiences, Aar-

onson (1971) developed a progression of deepening verbalizations aimed at guiding trained Ss into abandoning identification of the senses, relinquishing ego-identification, and dispensing with usual logical categories of distinction. To achieve extrovertive mystical states, he used techniques aimed at expanding the ego across barriers of space and time.

The techniques which I have evolved and will describe were inspired by the original observations and experiments conducted by Fogel and Hoffer (1962), and by the more recent experiments of Aaronson (1968). In Fogel and Hoffer's experiment, a talented and well-trained S was led into deep hypnosis and made to listen to an oscillator with the belief that its speed was constant. When, unknown to her, the speed was progressively increased, *S* became progressively more manic. When the speed was gradually decreased, depression set in, until, at speeds near zero, she retreated into a catatonic state. This experiment suggested that a person's behavior, mood, emotion, and cognition can be altered very radically through basic manipulations of the dimensions of time.

Aaronson (1968) gave to his trained, deep-hypnotic Ss various posthypnotic suggestions. For instance, posthypnotic suggestions of a "restricted present" generally produced evidence of depression; suggestions of total absence of the present elicited a schizophrenic-like catatonic state. On the other hand, posthypnotic suggestions of "expanded" time – especially expanded present and expanded future – led his *S*s to experiences of supreme serenity, during which the strictures and anxieties connected with passage of time disappeared. Similar suggestions involving "restriction" or "elimination" or "expansion" of space elicited comparable alterations of perception, emotion, mood, and cognition. These changes were dramatically illustrated by one *S* through drawings and paintings of the same scene, seen under different posthypnotically suggested time-conditions or space-conditions.

I have found it feasible to apply the above observations to the clinical area. The patient's conscious and subconscious needs, as well as our own understanding of such needs and our ability to follow and to guide him, determine the results: a schizophrenic-like experience, or a "conversion" occurrence, or a mystical state. For instance, an excellent S and superb student became belligerently paranoiac when she emerged from hypnosis; the opening of her eyes was the cue for the posthypnotic suggestion that, "upon coming out of hypnosis, distances would seem very short, people and objects would be close, clear, and distinct." Upon opening her eyes to this radically changed space, she had felt terribly closed-in and threatened. The same student was given the posthypnotic suggestion that, upon opening her eyes, she would find herself in a gently expanding space, with people and objects shining in marvelous luminosity. Upon emerging from hypnosis she seemed to radiate ethereal serenity. She later described her experience as soothingly unreal, ineffable, without end or beginning, a wonderful universe without problems.

Method

Selection of Patients

It seemed to me that patients suffering from severe protracted or recurrent pain and who were insufficiently or no longer responding to other hypnotic techniques might benefit by achieving mystical experiences. The pain itself and, in patients with incurable illnesses, the known or surmised hopelessness of the diagnosis would be strong motivating forces. The majority of patients to whom I offered the possibility of mystical experiences had had at least two or more sessions of hypnosis. I knew, therefore, with sufficient approximation, their potential hypnotic talent and what resistances they might offer. I knew their ability and their willingness to let go of reality, and I had given them training in pri-

mary-process thinking and stimulated their imagination-potential through guided imagery and induced dreams. For their part, they had had the opportunity to test my understanding and my empathy.

Procedure

Before presenting appropriate cases, I will give some of the verbalizations which I currently utilize. It should be kept in mind that these are modifiable according to the patient's capabilities, needs, responses, and degree of hypnotic talent and training. Transference and counter-transference obviously play an important role.

Introvertive mystical experiences. Usually the patient has been previously induced to a medium level of hypnosis by my method of "reversed hand levitation," which is based largely on concentrated attention with detachment. The reversed hand levitation has generally the advantage, when compared with traditional levitation, of implicitly suggesting relaxation, deepening, and "letting go" (Sacerdote, 1970).

The patient who has responded well to previous inductions will already be able to experience dissociative phenomena and deep relaxation. When there is evidence for both, I repeatedly, patiently, and monotonously suggest:

Now, as every word travels from my lips to your ears to reach your brain, your body progressively enjoys more and more complete relaxation in every muscle and cell; and your mind delights in calm, clear, peaceful serenity. . . . You are now surrounded by a soothing atmosphere of absolute calmness . . ., protected from danger, disturbance, and fear. And while relaxation and peaceful serenity penetrate deeper and deeper to every cell of your body, we are safely surrounded in every direction by wider and wider transparent, concentric spheres of luminous serenity, of cheerful

calmness. . . .[1] You are safely bathing and comfortably breathing in the center of these transparent spheres, while luminous calmness all around you penetrates even more deeply within your body and permeates your mind. . . . All voluntary and involuntary reactions and responses gradually fade and disappear. . . . Little by little, you become free of fears, of anxieties, of thinking, of feeling.

Extrovertive mystical experiences. The patient who has similarly been led to a state of increasing dissociation and body relaxation is first guided by me through an imaginary climb to the top of a symbolic mountain:

Now finally you are at the top and you are able to look towards the sunny side of the mountain. . . . You notice the blue of the sky and the brightness of the sun. You enjoy the warmth of the sunshine on your shoulders and your back, on your arms and hands, on your legs and feet. You breathe in slowly and deeply the clean, pure, cool air. . . . In front of your eyes under the quiet blue sky you see the beautiful green valley; and beyond the valley a picturesque chain of mountains . . . and beyond that first chain, you distinguish another valley; and beyond it another chain of mountains . . . and then beyond, more and more valleys and more and more mountains and plains, and rivers, and lakes and oceans extending and expanding further and further out in every direction to receding horizons. . . . As the view continues to expand, your ears rejoice in the natural music of the wind, the rustling of grasses and leaves and tree branches, the singing of birds, the chirping of crickets, the tolling of bells; your nostrils smell all the fragrances of the trees, and the grasses, and the flowers . . . and your eyes watch in wonderment the continuously "expanding" view of the expanding future. . . .

Note: [1]The transparency which I explicitly mention communicates to the patient that he can see and be seen; that he is not emotionally isolated.

Remarks about Physical and Emotional Pain

It is probably absurd to attempt a totally unequivocal differentiation between physical and emotional pain. However, we accept the conceptual distinction made by Hilgard and Hilgard (1975) between physical pain and suffering. Pain, as a physical condition related to damaging alterations of some organ or tissue, obviously serves the patient as an important, protective alert-system. It also supplies important clues for the physician searching for the correct diagnosis. But after this teleological function is accomplished and appropriate treatment had been instituted, pain often persists because physical and emotional components interact to perpetuate or recreate physiological pain and emotional suffering.

Butler (1954); Crasilneck, Stirman, Wilson, McCraine, and Fogelman (1955); Erickson (1958); Sacerdote (1970); and others have described and explained methodologies for the relief of pain in clinical situations through the use of hypnosis. What I shall present below is how and, hopefully, why the induction of mystical experiences can add new dimensions to the treatment of resistant pain. I shall not repeat here the reasons for my firm belief that hypnotic analgesia and anesthesia have a neurophysiological and neurochemical basis (Sacerdote, 1970), but I must add that I cannot see the basis for the assertion by Davidson and Goleman (1977) that, while Transcendental Meditation acts primarily by eliminating sensory input, hypnosis operates by reducing the experience of suffering through an alteration in the subject's criterion for reporting pain. Their statement, “techniques utilizing a strategy which require the sustained focusing of attention on a single target-percept (T.M.) result . . . in modifications of afferent input which may, in certain instances, take place below the cortical level [p. 299]” seems to imply that hypnosis does not; but it is well known that selected attention to a single target has been utilized for hypnotic induction since the time of Braid. In general, our conception of what we are doing and the physical, intel-

lectual, and emotional environment in which "happenings" occur are more important than the label used for classification: in a certain atmosphere and with a certain expectation, something will be called Transcendental Meditation which, in a different environment and with different expectations, would be called hypnosis.

Why and How Should Mystical States Help to Relieve Pain?

The idea of eliciting extrovertive mystical states came to me while I was dealing with advanced cancer patients; they were raked with pain, beyond the reach of any further palliative treatment. I was familiar with the effects that the perception of expanded present, expanded future, and expanded space could have on the mood and reality-perceptions of normal individuals. It seemed worthwhile to see if patients in pain, guided into symbolic, multisensory imagery, could be led to experience perceptions of expanding time and space. Such experiences might "free" them from the limits of time, from the restrictions of activity; death itself could become merely the completion of life, rather than an event to be feared. In the expanded present and future, people and objects could appear to the patients as bathed in luminous reflections. Synesthesias of colors, music, and fragrances would further distance them from the "reality" of pain, desperate illness, dependency, and depression. Mystical states could enable the patient to deal in entirely new ways with problems of guilt and punishment, of life and death. They might also encourage him to come to terms with these problems on a philosophical or theological basis.

The other approach, leading to "introvertive" mystical experiences, is based upon progressively deeper states of muscular relaxation and increasing psychological calm and serenity. The gradual restrictions of perceptions and responses suggested to the patient are also symbolized for him with the image of his body fully relaxed at the quiet center of concentric, luminous, serene spheres of wider and

wider radius. Thus, a kind of sensory and emotional isolation is established which, in itself, can facilitate psychological and physiological dissociation of the loci of pathology from the thalamic and cortical centers of pain perception.

CASE REPORTS

CASE ONE

A 62-year-old woman was referred with complaints of severe headaches, spastic painful contractions of the throat, neck, and back, accompanied by hypertension, depression, insomnia, and dryness of oral mucosa. Years of orthodox analysis and several months of intermittent therapy, including hypnoanalysis, had produced little physical and emotional improvement.

Introvertive mystical experiences were elicited by conducting reversed right-hand levitation, followed by slowly administered suggestions that she would feel herself to be the center of concentric spheres of luminous, transparent calmness where she would feel protected from all disturbances, but without fear of separation or isolation: she would bathe in these transparent, concentric spheres of luminous calm that would penetrate and permeate her body and mind. One month later, somewhat different introvertive mystical experiences were elicited by simply describing to her a gradual reduction of responses to outer or inner stimulations, her brain learning to eliminate all voluntary and autonomic nervous system responses during the state of hypnosis, while, again, wider and wider spheres of transparent calmness developed around her.

Before the induction of mystical states, the patient had been unable to resume a painting career. When I saw her 2 months later, she had completed three paintings, she had become chairman for a series of symphonic concerts, she was feeling less guilty in her

relations with her husband, and had achieved improvement in her entire emotional outlook in spite of the recurrence of occasional bouts of headaches and tension. Also, in the middle of a hot summer, thirst and dryness of the mouth, a complaint of long standing, had disappeared. She now learned to enter self-hypnosis and enjoy excellent mystical states while swimming alone in the pool in the early morning hours. The depression and multiple symptoms almost completely faded away; no further therapy was required. Her feelings were expressed in a letter she wrote several months later: "I feel now that there is a calmness within my grasp. That I have seen it and touched it and that with some more practice it will become easier and easier to keep it at hand when I need it."

CASE TWO

Mr. H, a bachelor in his later 30s, had been in therapy sporadically for several years. He was constantly struggling with anxiety, depression, and guilt accompanied by very painful physical symptoms. The week which had preceded the first hypnotically induced mystical experience was, in the patient's own words, "pure hell; my back has been killing me constantly, and I have been angry and getting angrier with myself. My neck has been stiff and my head has been awful and my abdominal cramps and diarrhea have not let up."

The patient spontaneously entered hypnosis while talking to me, asked for additional time to become more relaxed, and then permitted me to guide him through an imaginary mountain-climbing. I slowly and monotonously started to describe the climb step-by-step through the last few hundred feet of a difficult and dangerous path to the top. I would let him rest from time to time and let him look back and down along the path to notice the many difficult and dangerous places through which he had been: the precipices and crevices into which he had fallen and from which he had been saved with difficulty, and the heavy fog and dark clouds hanging

over the lower valleys. Finally, he was led to the very top of the mountain, free to look over to the sunny other side and to take in the "expanding view of the expanding future."

The following is a verbatim transcript of the conversation that occurred at this point:

Pt: I see clouds and clouds and clouds . . . I'm waiting for a break in the clouds . . . my feet are covered by clouds. . . . Way up there, there is a little beautiful corner of blue sky coming out.

Dr: More beautiful and more blue than ever.

Pt: Just nothing but the soft clouds (jerking movements of his head and neck). Way off there is an opening (his hands point forward, then he shakes his head with a disgusted expression). This beautiful white layer is disappearing, destroyed by the blue that's coming over. . . . There is the tip of a triangle right at my feet and I wish I could cover it up again . . . the blue is not the sky, it is water and I can feel it on my feet. . . . Now finally I am getting very relaxed, and it is so soothing on my back; so soothing and delightful because I am swimming further out in the triangle of blue water, further and further away from the clouds . . . just between the blue of the sky and the darker blue of the water . . . swimming so smoothly without effort and delightfully [laughing aloud at this point]. It is so crazy, but such a delightful idea – I still see the mountain sticking out of the water because I am swimming, but at the same time I am standing on top of the mountain and from the top looking down at me swimming so smoothly and so easily.

Then, spontaneously coming out of hypnosis, he stated, as the *me* standing on the mountain was becoming smaller and smaller, I felt some sadness. At the beginning, when the small blue triangle was opening up, it scared me, until I felt the water starting to lap at my

feet; then it was natural for me to move gently into the water and to swim gracefully and without effort, like never before.

At the next visit he continued to talk.

All week I tried to recapture the mystical experience of last Saturday. The image of me would pop into my mind unexpectedly, looking from the right side at me on the mountain, at other times from the left, and then I would try to merge the two images.

The experience of last week was real; I was really those two people, with such clarity of feelings and seeing. But even on the much reduced scale of intensity and reality, each time the experience reoccurred during the week I became fully relaxed with disappearance of all pain and suffering.

Then, spontaneously entering hypnosis, he started to describe:

I'm now on top of the mountain, just about to dive in to blend with the *me* who is swimming. But I am still aching because I'm still struggling so hard, digging in the rock with my fingers, tugging to pull myself to the top of the mountain.

After having accepted my suggestion to let himself go, he described himself as floating without effort on top of the clouds.

One week later, upon entering hypnosis, the patient found himself again climbing toward the top of the mountain and, upon reaching the top, he described "an uninterrupted layer of clouds expanding into the expanding horizon of the expanding future." He then described the beautiful perfection of all the colors extending over the horizon and, following my suggestion that all his senses were becoming involved in the experience, he spontaneously smelled the fragrance of a red rose and then saw red roses growing all over – out

of the clouds, for miles and miles, each rose larger than his hand. His eyes closed because they hurt from the profusion of colors. The clouds themselves became an infinite field of roses, and he stepped in to feel and touch the soft velvety petals, enjoying the experience of being, at the same time, in the middle of all those petals and in my office.

When he suddenly became saddened by the appearance of huge black clouds sweeping over the sky and hiding everything he was enjoying, I suggested, "The clouds will soon open up and pour rain on the roots of the rose plants." It is then that he explained how the clouds disappeared and the beautiful and gorgeous rainbow took their place, while he enjoyed the rich smell of fresh rain and became involved with the reflection from diamond-like drops of rain inside the rose petals, and with the colors of the rainbow, and with the perfect blueness of the sky. But the rainbow faded in mid-arch.

The abdominal pain and gastro-intestinal dysfunction, and the stiffness and pain in his head, neck, and back ceased, only to recur a few weeks later. He had understood, experienced, and accepted the emotional basis for his painful and disabling symptoms; he had enjoyed total freedom from them, but had unfortunately concluded that he would neither let himself change, nor be prodded into permanent changes.

CASE THREE

Mrs. K. M., aged 62, was still very active in a successful, independent career, despite migraines, from which she had suffered since the age of 18, and which had recently become even more disabling. The result of thorough work-ups at well-known headache clinics had resulted only in prescriptions for ergotamine, which, however, did not prevent severe attacks from occurring as often as every 2 or 3 days.

Deeply religious, she felt she had intellectually succeeded in reconciling strong beliefs with independence of judgment. The convent where she had spent a good part of her childhood and adolescence had molded her habits into ones of strict self-discipline and in the use of meditation. More recently, she had sought help in the practice of Yoga.

The first few sessions of hypnotherapy not only reduced the frequency of migraine attacks but also removed the pain of a concurrent severe attack of herpes zoster. She easily accepted the hypnotic experience of feeling in the center of wider and wider spheres of transparent, calm relaxation. She also surprised her physician when the herpetic lesions disappeared in a few days with no after-pain. The migraine attacks also became more manageable as she became able to perceive a kind of "aura" which preceded the attacks and which permitted her to abort them with very small doses of medication. The patient discovered that her migraine attacks were associated with situations in which she was prevented from expressing anger: in the long years of convent training she had felt pushed to attain some kind of sainthood through self-sacrifice, pain, and punishment which she had been taught to consider as ennobling experiences. In her own words:

The main difference between religious meditation and hypnosis is that the latter has permitted me to reach a state where there is almost total exclusion of all thoughts. . . . If thoughts are present they seem to be flowing like water and I feel weightless, protected, and insulated in a kind of *Nirvana*.

Later in therapy, I guided her – as I had the previous patient – to the top of the mountain to have multisensory experiences involving expansion of space and time. She then became almost free from migraine by utilizing self-hypnosis which brought her additional mystical perceptions, such as those described below:

I saw a beautiful golden light extending all over and permeating everything, and I knew that it was the hereafter and it was very comfortable. . . . Since then I'm free of all preoccupations which had enveloped me since I had lost in close succession my mother and a very close friend of mine.

I found myself trying to reach toward a deep, deep blue, not quite making it, but opening up a conscience that had been so deeply buried. . . . I sensed myself a God-like creature on top of the mountain, while many people from every direction were trying to pull me down.

. . . very earthy experience, with babies sucking at my breasts and little children holding on to me and I feeling just love. The music of another composition had brought me into the waters of luminous caves, where I felt cold and fearful at first, then comfortable and warm while passing beyond an arch. Later on I was looking down from the moon at a small space which surrounded the earth with diminutive trees, animals, and little me's, then gradually feeling that I was passing into the sunshine.

New insights facilitated by these mystical experiences brought her recognition that she could put order in her life; that, while avoiding being tugged in every direction by many people, she could achieve a real rebirth. She now realized she needed more time for herself, for enjoyment of music, for quiet contemplation, while reducing her involvement with her children and grandchildren.

Spontaneous hypnotic mystical experiences elicited by music differed somewhat from the mystical experiences this patient had had in my office or during formally induced self-hypnosis.

It is mostly the control of myself that I've learned with hypnosis: as I go into it I see the very deep blue of the ocean, feel the urge to become submerged into it even if somebody or something is

trying to pull me out. Often it is the children who drag me out; and then I feel as a 16-year-old girl out of another time, and the being pulled out of the water is a rebirth to a new way of life which I need and want. What it means is I'm not quite ready to abandon all that I have concretely achieved and what I am: I am not yet able to become one with this blue ocean to which I'm afraid to surrender myself . . . though I look at it as a blessing.

A few months later she underwent the following mystical experience while taking Communion:

I was again in the deep blue sea, surrounded by playful porpoises. Joyful tears were welling up; hundreds of happy children and many people I know were surrounding me, happily clapping hands and smiling at me. Also, penguin-like religious figures were smiling.

A very similar experience during hypnosis in my office marked the final disappearance of all migraine attacks.

CASE FOUR

Mrs. L. L., aged 50, about whom I have reported in greater detail (Sacerdote, in press), was suffering from massive pulmonary metastases from a giant-cell tumor of the right radius. Severe episodes of sudden massive hemoptysis had threatened her life. At the time of her first visit, she suffered from severe pain in her back and chest, with persistent cough and dyspnea. Almost resigned to a progressively more painful and disabling disease and to death within a few months, she, today, attributes the fact that she is active, reasonably well, and comfortable – 5 years after her expected demise – to the effects of hypnotherapy.

In this patient's case, the use of mystical experiences was introduced in the therapy shortly after her recovery from a near-fatal hemor-

rhage. As in Cases 2 and 3, I guided her to the top of the mystical mountain to relax, rest, enjoy, and experience with all of her senses the warmth of the sunshine, the purity of the air, the blue sky, and the expanding view.

The implications of a perceptual expansion of space and time were included in my suggestion that she look "at the expanding view of the expanding future," within which she could gracefully advance, thereby removing the usual limitations of space and time. After her first mystical experience, no specific suggestions for relief or prevention of pain were needed, and, in her words, "the expansion of time and space also became identified with an expansion of the vital capacity of my lungs."

The "trip to the top of the mountain" became a routine conclusion to each of her visits. A talented musician and music-lover, she has been left free to experience the symphonic background of the mystical experience.

Discussion

The two approaches that I have described and illustrated are comparatively simple methods for the induction of mystical experiences. The trip to the top of the mountain appears to facilitate a form of extrovertive mystical experiences, while the experience at the center of transparent, concentric spheres provides the basis for attaining introvertive mystical experiences without eliciting anxiety or panic.

Other approaches can easily be conceived. The therapist must use his own experience and his intimate knowledge of his patient before choosing to guide him through any kind of mystical experience; he must be able to judge who can respond and who cannot and how to induce a positive response. The hypnotic induction of mystical states[2] represents a powerful tool which enables the thera-

pist to further reduce or eliminate unnecessary pain, while usefully and favorably involving his patients in new areas of perception and understanding.

Note: [2]We can also wonder if the hypnotic induction of mystical states could produce the kind of neuro-chemical changes which occur under the influence of LSD and other psychedelic substances. Incidentally, LSD has been used experimentally to reduce or eliminate pain in terminal cancer patients.

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Chapter 12
Renaud van Quekleberghe et al. Simulation of Near-Death and Out-of-Body Experiences Under Hypnosis

Editor: This is an article by Renaud van Quekleberghe, Peter Göbel, and Elenore Hertweck that appeared in *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, vol. 14, no. 2 (1994–95), pp. 151–64. At that time Renaud van Quekleberghe was a professor of psychology at Koblenz-Landau University in Germany

ABSTRACT

In this article we report on an OBE and NDE-simulation study carried out with psychology students (n = 21). In addition to deep relaxation and special forms of hypnotic induction, a number of supplementary techniques were introduced. Effects of the simulation were examined by means of a questionnaire developed especially for the simulation experiment. Modifications and improvements were tested on several subjects who scored high on our questionnaires, and qualitative analyses were performed.

Our observations and data are in accordance with findings from NDE and OBE research.

Introduction

In connection with a previous research project on the aftermaths of near-death experiences on the life course conducted by Gieseke and van Quekelberghe, we repeatedly observed that extraordinary states of consciousness are common phenomena among the general population [1].

A comprehensive instrument for the assessment of altered states of consciousness to assess not only well-known NDE ("near-death experiences") and OBE ("out-of-body experiences") phenomena, but also other types of rather extreme experiences was developed: the "Assessment Schedule for Altered States of Consciousness" (ASASC). The full-length version of the ASASC consists of 325 items in fourteen subscales. A short form of the scale (128 items) is also available [2].

The results of initial validity and reliability studies, as well as the outcomes of studies on diverse samples (e.g., schizophrenics, depressive patients, meditating persons, heroin addicts, and alcoholics) have been presented elsewhere [3,4].

One especially interesting result of these studies is that a subgroup of persons (n=20) of the so-called "normal" sample (n=141), who rated the NDE-items the highest, also obtained the highest total score on the ASASC—frequently surpassing even meditating subjects and heroin addicts. On the basis of specific data, one may assume that at most six of the twenty subjects have had "real" NDEs previously.

These results lend support to our assumption that it might be worthwhile to evoke NDE-effects, which may be beneficial for prevention

and therapy, through the use of appropriate simulation programs. As a first step in this direction, we considered enhancing standard relaxation techniques by including diverse hypnotic inductions of specific NDE-components.

In the following we will first report on an NDE simulation experiment with twenty-one psychology students as subjects. We will then present some observations as well as initial results of a special simulation training, which was carried out with those subjects who seemed particularly responsive to the simulation program.

Near-Death and Out-of-Body Experiences: some Preliminary Theoretical and Methodological Issues

In the scope of this article we will give a brief introduction in current issues of NDE and OBE research. In his review article, Schroder-Kunhardt presents a comprehensive survey of neurophysiological explanatory models and hypotheses [5].

Without doubt, Metzinger has formulated new and interesting hypotheses in connection with OBE [6], some of which go beyond the well-known studies done by Blackmore [7] or Gabbard and Twemlow [8].

Unfortunately, even the definition and classification of such altered states of consciousness has led to strongly divergent statements. Whereas Moody's [9] starting point are fifteen universally observable NDE-components, a “5-Phase Model” is assumed by Ring [10]. (1. Core affective cluster; 2. OBE; 3. Tunnel/Dark area; 4. Seeing the light; 5. Entering the light) and Greyson [11] describes three main NDE-groups, in which the number and sequence of NDE-components are quite variable:

1. "transcendental group" (encountering strange beings, mystic experience, experiencing a symbolic boundary—30%)
2. "affective group" (ecstatic and cosmic feelings, experiencing an all-embracing light—37%)
3. "cognitive group" (distortion of time, acceleration of mental activities, life panorama, sudden all-embracing understanding—33%).

Therefore, it is not surprising that some researchers consider "life in retrospect" and clear-cut out-of-body experiences as key elements of NDE, while others do not necessarily regard such components as belonging to NDE.

If the definitions, classifications and methods of assessment (e.g., clinical interviews, questionnaires, self-reports) may be said to be quite contrasting, this is even more true for the explanatory models and the involved disciplines (e.g., analytical psychology (Grosso, [12]), psychopathology (Noyes, [13]), neurophysiology (cf. Schroder-Kunhardt, [5]). Presumably, an integrating theory will be a long time in coming.

At any rate, one may assume that

1. all NDE-components, which have been established to date, have also been observed in many other contexts other than death (e.g., stress reaction, dreams, drug use, meditation). In some cases, the order in which such components occur is similar to the sequence found in real near-death experiences.
2. in most cases, such altered states of consciousness have a strong, long lasting, positive effect on the individual [14, 15].

On the basis of both assumptions, we decided to apply techniques of deep relaxation and hypnosis in order to simulate as many of

the established components of NDE as possible or even therapeutic effects could be appraised more precisely.

On the basis of our constructivistic epistemology of altered states of consciousness, we consider mental phenomena not as representations, but rather as mental simulations (cf [6]), which are partly based on genetic neuroprograms.

We regard trance-inducing resp. hypnotical techniques as preferred instruments for modeling and simulating "neuropsychosocial constructions," such as out-of-body and near-death phenomena.

NDE Simulation Experiment

Sample

The NDE simulation experiment was carried out with twenty-one psychology students who volunteered for the study; ten subjects were male and eleven female. Almost all of the participants were undergraduates between twenty and thirty years of age. No subject had had a near-death-experience prior to the experiment. The scientific literature on NDE and OBE was completely unknown to almost all of the subjects at the time of the experiment. Only four persons reported drinking alcohol and/or taking hashish to a "large or great extent" (ASASC-subscale, "Personal Data"). None of the subjects had used hard drugs, such as LSD, heroin, or cocaine. Merely one subject responded "yes" to the item "I have been hypnotized before." Four subjects reported having had some experiences with imaginative therapy techniques in the broader sense.

The subjects were told that the experiment was designed as an empirical validation of the above mentioned ASASC questionnaire. The only information the subjects received beforehand was that they would be required to relax as deeply as they could in

the experiment and that pleasant audio-visual stimuli would be presented to them.

Almost all subjects met the experimenters—the first two authors of this article—for the first time at the beginning of the experimental session. The sample studied here does not include any persons with previous experience or training in this area. Therefore, it may be assumed that the duration of the experiment (45 minutes) was definitely too short for a number of persons to achieve a deep level of relaxation.

Experimental Set-up and Procedure

The study was carried out by the first two authors with assistance of advanced psychology students.

A short overview of the experiment was presented to each subject before the beginning of the session: 1) completion of a number of questionnaires, including the long-version of the ASASC; 2) induction of deep relaxation; 3) presentation of audio-visual stimuli; 4) completion of further questionnaires; 5) short interview.

The questionnaire administered at the beginning of the session included a number of short anxiety and general mood scales. Subsequent to the simulation, a questionnaire consisting of eighty items (SEQ, "Simulation Experiment Questionnaire") was presented, which was developed especially for this study (see below for details).

The components of the simulation program were developed analogous to a typical, complete near-death-experience (cf. 9, 16) and included the following phases:

1. **Relaxation:** 10-15 minutes. Based on the principles of autogenic training. Early introduction of dissociations, such as: "Your mind! your body."

2. **Induction of OBE:**
   a. Floating over the university campus.
   b. Floating above one's own body in the experimental room (near the ceiling, diagonally in front of the subject).

3. **Life course in retrospect:** Induction of a spontaneous, automatic emergence of past life events, similar to a slide show.
   a. Childhood
   b. Adolescence
   c. Adulthood.

4. **Tunnel experience:**
   a. At first, rather like in a dark room
   b. Acceleration in a long tunnel, slanted upwards
   c. Light at the end of the tunnel. (From 4c up to and including 5d: Light is presented by means of a lamp with a dimmer while gradually increasing brightness to maximum intensity.)

5. **Light experience:**
   a. Encountering a golden light
   b. Description of ecstatic feelings (from 5c onward: Use of chimes and triangles)
   c. Achievement of unlimited understandings within the light/harmonious sounds
   d. Pulsating light (At 5d: Rhythmic variation of light intensity, similar to a throbbing)
   e. Visions (figures of light, landscapes of light). (At 5e: All lights gradually fade out).

6. **Gradual return to the present situation:**
   a. Emergence of an obstacle (river or wall)

b. Re-uniting with one's body
c. Transition to normal consciousness.

Results

In this section quantitative results are presented for the subscales of the ASASC and the SEQ, which was completed at the end of the experiment.

The SEQ consists of thirteen subscales, which correspond to the individual sequential components of the simulated NDE to a great degree. Items are rated on a unipolar scale from zero ("not at all") to three ("strongly"). The subscales are:

1	Relaxation	REL
2	Out-of-body	OBE
3	Life in retrospect	LIF
4	Tunnel	TUN
5	Light experience	LEX
6	Ecstasy	ECS
7	Omniscience	OMN
8	Visions	VIS
9	Music	MUS
10	Return	RET(1)
11	Transformation of time and space	TTS
12	After-effects	AFT(2)
13	Motivation	MOT(3)

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(1) "Return" is defined as the distinct perception of the spiritual body re-entering the earthly body.
(2) "After-effects" include observation of direct positive effects as well as the expectation of long-term consequences.

(3) "Motivation" denotes the willingness to participate in similar experiments in the future.

All in all, hardly any significant differences were found between male and female subjects. Due to the fact that drugs are used relatively infrequently in our sample, significant differences between drug users and non-users were only observed occasionally, mostly in connection with hashish.

For each SEQ subscale (see above) we compared the "top third" (n =7) and occasionally the "top half" (n =10), in other words, the persons with higher subscale scores, with the "bottom third" (n =7) and occasionally the "bottom half" (n =10), namely the persons achieving lower scores on the subscales.

We tested for significant differences between each two groups as defined above using r-test analyses (one-tailed), which were performed for all subscales of the SEQ and the ASASC. In addition to these r-test results, SEQ-subscale intercorrelations (based on n =21) are presented below.

(1) Relaxation
Those persons ("top third") indicating that they were able to relax very well achieved significant higher scores in a number of simulated NDE-components. This is especially evident for light experiences.

In general, one can say that those persons who reported very positive experiences as well as high dissociation ability in the ASASC also achieved a deep level of relaxation in this experiment (see Table 1).

(2) OBE
Those persons with the highest scores on the OBE items in the SEQ ("top third") achieved significant higher scores in almost all other sim-

ulated components. The greatest differences between this group and the "bottom third" group were found in "life course in retrospect," "ecstasy," and "transformation of time and space" (see Table 2).

The highest intercorrelation between the OBE-subscale and another subscale was found for the ability to view life in retrospect. Incidentally, only modest positive inter-correlations were found for all other NDE-components.

On the basis of a number of other data and arguments, we put forward the following thesis:

Willingness and ability to engage in OBE are especially supportive of processes of viewing life in retrospect.

Table 1. SEQ-Subscale REL

	t-test (One-Tailed, "Top Third" vs. "Bottom Third ")	Scale Intercorrelation (n=21)
1	REL***	1.00
2	OBE*	.57*
3	LIF	.28
4	TUN*	.40
5	LEX***	.53*
6	ECS*	.59*
7	OMN*	.51*
8	VIS*	.40
9	MUS	.63*
10	RET**	.36
11	TIS*	.44
12	AFT**	.47
		*p <= .05 **p <= .01 ***p <= .001

Table 2 SEQ-Subscale OBE

	t-test (One-Tailed, "Top Third" vs. "Bottom Third ")	Scale Intercorrelation (n=21)
1	REL***	.57*
2	OBE*	1.00
3	LIF	.77**
4	TUN*	.52*
5	LEX***	.59*
6	ECS*	.62*
7	OMN*	.49
8	VIS*	.53*
9	MUS	.53*
10	RET**	.52*
11	TIS*	.64**
12	AFT**	.65**
		*p <= .05 **p <= .01 ***p <= .001

In general it appears that the OBE-component need not be considered an indispensable part of a "simulated NDE"—the same holds true for "life in retrospect." This is in line with the general trend of NDE research findings (cf. [1]).

(3) Light Experiences

Those persons ("upper third") who reported having the most positive light experiences achieved distinctly higher scores on all subscales except "life in retrospect," as those subjects belonging to the "bottom third" (see Table 3). We found that light experiences were a central, if not the most important component.

Light experiences correlated highest ($p \sim .001$) with depth of relaxation, ecstatic feelings of love, visions, cosmic consciousness, and the expectation of long-lasting positive after-effects.

Most of our subjects agreed with our thesis that very bright, light orange to yellowish-white light—combined with pleasant warmth emanating from the lamps—provides an excellent basis for the development and heightening of very positive feelings (such as dynamic harmony, self-abandon, pure love, intense joy, great satisfaction and tranquility). In other words, the more clear and bright the yellowish-white light is, the more difficult it is for dysphoric moods and feelings to crop up.

Table 3. SEQ-Subscale LEX

	t-test (One-Tailed, "Top Third" vs. "Bottom Third")	Scale Intercorrelation (n=21)
1	REL***	.53*
2	OBE*	.59*
3	LIF	.43
4	TUN*	.75**
5	LEX***	1.00
6	ECS*	.81**
7	OMN*	.73**
8	VIS*	.88**
9	MUS	.53*
10	RET**	.62*
11	TIS*	.56*
12	AFT**	.76**
		*p <= .05 **p <= .01 ***p <= .001

In general, our results support two assumptions. First, the components seem to have a natural sequential order:

1. Perception of light at the end of the tunnel
2. Moving oneself up towards the light
3. Entry into the light
4. Ecstatic light experiences
5. Visions (e.g. figures, landscapes)

Second, as the person progresses from 1 to 5, the experiences in the other NDE-components become more intensive.

We believe that both assumptions hold true for simulated as well as real NDEs.

(4) Music

Subjects ("upper third") who react favorably to musical sounds achieve significantly higher scores in central NDE-components, such as tunnel experience, light and ecstasy (see Table 4). They are able to relax quite easily and expect very positive after-effects from the simulation experiment.

In general, subjects responded to and processed musical sounds (triangle, chimes) in a positive manner. When presenting sounds, it is important to make sure that intensity and frequency are well-balanced.

Table 4. SEQ-Subscale MUS

	t-test (One-Tailed, "Top Third" vs. "Bottom Third")	Scale Intercorrelation (n=21)
1	REL***	.63*
2	OBE*	.54*
3	LIF	.23
4	TUN*	.65**
5	LEX***	.53*
6	ECS*	.62*
7	OMN*	.54*
8	VIS*	.43
9	MUS	1.00*
10	RET**	.23
11	TIS*	.13
12	AFT**	.58*
		*p <= .05 **p <= .01

All in all the musical component does contribute to an intensification of ecstatic states of consciousness, but it has not proven to be an important factor affecting NDE-simulation. The same holds true for real near-death experiences.

(5) Return

Those persons (the "top half " in this case) experiencing the return to their own body particularly vividly, achieved significant higher scores in all simulated NDE-components with the exception of "life in retrospect" (see Table 5). Those subjects who experienced their return to the present situation as if they were coming back from a completely different world, reported more highly positive experiences, increased dissociation and stronger hallucinatory experiences as those subjects in the "bottom half."

(6) After-effects

Those subjects ("top half ") who expect longer positive after-effects have significantly higher scores in many other simulated NDE-components. They are also more motivated to participate in similar experiments (motivation $p < .05$). All other r-tests resulted in no statistically significant differences for the motivation subscale.

Table 5. SEQ-Subscale RET

	t-test (One-Tailed, "Top Third" vs. "Bottom Third")	Scale Intercorrelation (n=21)
1	REL***	.36
2	OBE*	.52
3	LIF	.37
4	TUN*	.47
5	LEX***	.62*
6	ECS*	.47
7	OMN*	.56

8	VIS*	.70**
9	MUS	.23
10	RET**	1.00
11	TIS*	.85**
12	AFT**	.47
		*p <= .05 **p <= .01 ***p <= .001

In general, the results of the simulation experiment are encouraging. The results point out that with the help of deep relaxation and hypnotic methods, NDE components can be simulated relatively well and can lead to at least short-term positive changes in consciousness.

Obviously, further empirical studies are required to answer the question concerning possible positive long-term effects.

After having conducted the simulation experiment, we decided to check into possible modifications and improvements of induction methods and simulation techniques.

Preliminary Results of Supplemental Training

We selected several persons from the above-mentioned sample, who obtained the highest scores on the SEQ, for additional training. A number of verbal instructions and mental images were tested on these persons; in addition, various improvements or innovations in technique were introduced and analyzed. One open question concerned the extent to which the simulation condition could be improved in order to heighten the intensity of NDE-like experiences.

Since we have only studied several subjects and a small number of supplementary techniques to date, we are not yet in a position to present conclusive results. However, we can identify a trend toward definite progress in intensifying or deepening experiences in several NDE-components after three to four additional simula-

tion sessions. This holds true at least for the OBE and light experience components, which were our main focus.

A shorter NDE-simulation program was developed for supplementary training, composed of the sequences listed below which proved to be effective. We assume that there is room for further improvement of a number of aspects of this program.

Program sequence:

- short relaxation period accompanied by the dissociation of "spirit body/ body";
- strolling through a nice, clear night lit up by a full moon;
- at first slow, then increasingly faster lift-off of the spirit-body to the stars;
- arrival at a gigantic source of light;
- "spirit body" in a permeable, transparent light sphere floating in dynamic, 3-dimensional light. Light is described in terms normally used to describe water (e.g., flowing, bubbling, fountain-like);
- transition to an absolutely quiet zone, high above the light sources and light waves; the sphere of light moving in spirals toward the center of energy. Accompanied by sounds;
- sensing invisible radiation waves, just as if they were emanating from the innermost core of positive cosmic light energy;
- remaining close to this core. Becoming seized by and gradually partaking in the active radiation of pure positive light energy (at this step, lamps are brightest; rhythmic pulsation of light);
- leaving the core in spiral-like movements within the light sphere and relative quick journey back to earth. Leaving the light sphere (lamps are turned off);
- first the "spirit body" floats in the corridor in front of the experimental room and then above one's own body;

- the "spirit body" enters one's own body from behind;
- the subject is brought back to the present situation slowly but surely.

As for the instructions, we took the following aspects into consideration:

- avoidance of religious-mystical expressions;
- emphasis on super-positive light energy;
- movement of the "spirit body" within a transparent protective structure, which is permeable for all positive forces;
- emphasis on light as a 3-dimensional element analogous to water;
- encountering positive light energy via different sense modalities (especially hearing and feeling);
- consideration of individual preferences and abilities as far as possible.

As for OBEs in the narrower sense, definite advantages are achieved by introducing them toward the end of the session instead of directly after the relaxation phase. Persons who were confronted with a video recording of their own relaxed body—filmed from the ceiling of the experimental room—before the NDE simulation reported increasing ease of experiencing OBE-phenomena.

On the basis of such observations, we assume that persons with good capabilities of imagination and dissociation can make definite progress within a short period of time if they are trained with specially developed OBE video training programs.

All in all, the supplementary training sessions carried out to date show that OBE and NDE simulations can be improved and intensified to a great degree after a few training sessions. Facilitating factors include: strong considerations of individual resources in

working out the details of simulation program, using and applying special techniques such as effective metaphors, practicing OBE with the help of video recordings, special sound and light effects.

The following final remark made by one of our subjects, who has found autogenic training, one element of his treatment program for a serious illness (multiple sclerosis), to be quite satisfactory, is encouraging: "Autogenic training is fast food for me. What I have experienced here, is fit for a gourmet."

Discussion

The results of the main study as well as the observations made in the supplementary training sessions show that special hypnotic techniques and well-designed dissociation training are able to produce such experiences relatively quickly, which may sometimes be difficult to differentiate from "real NDE." We were able to establish that some of the subjects in our sample (more than we had expected) reported having impressive, novel experiences during the simulation. Such experiences included a vivid memory of long-forgotten childhood scenes, strong ecstatic feelings, some spiritual visions, and, in some cases, even anger or sadness when asked to re-enter the still-living body!

Although our experiment and supplementary training led to mostly positive effects (during and short time after training), one is confronted with the question why "real" NDEs have more intensive and longer lasting effects.

For one thing—partly because of our experiences with the intensive simulation of "shamanic journeys"—we believe that our simulation procedures need improvement in a number of aspects. However, the question to which degree the respective experienced context, in which the simulation takes place, can influence the kind and intensity of the experience as well as subsequent

appraisal, interpretation and remembering is still open. In other words, it must make a difference if an individual experiences—let's say—the "same NDE-sequence" during a fall while mountain-climbing, in which he or she remains uninjured, as a victim of a crime of violence, in his/her bed during a hypnopompic state or a lucid dream, or, as in the case of our experiment, as a subject in a biofeedback station having the typical motivation of psychology students, which—at the very least—may be described as ambivalent.

Despite numerous methodical limitations of this pilot study, many results of statistical analyses as well as a number of statements given in interviews have convinced us that the strategy we have developed to simulate specific states of consciousness under hypnosis is a promising one deserving further development and research.

A last remark: It is helpful if the subjects are clearly informed that they are dealing with a simulation. This often motivates the persons to participate more intensively. From an epistemological viewpoint, one can say that the less mental phenomena are conceptualized as representations—or to put it in other words—the more they are conceptualized as mental simulations, the smaller the difference between "simulated reality, true simulation, and mental reality."

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Chapter 13
Trance Dance

Trance is not limited to a deeply relaxed state. People can be in trance and ride bicycles or give lectures. Over the last 35,000 years of human history, trance has very often been achieved by music and dancing. Trance dance is sometimes called kinetic trance. In this paper I am going to outline some methods for achieving spiritual states using trance induced by music and dancing.

T.T.T. – Terpsichore Trance Therapy

The Brazilian psychiatrist David Akstein invented Terpsichore Trance Therapy, a group psychotherapy that utilizes kinetic movement trance, around 1965. It was based on 25 years of working with Brazilian clients. Nearly 50 percent of Brazilians are involved in religions that practice ritual trance. Akstein was acquainted with many sects and worked particularly closely with the Umbanda, a syncretistic religion that fuses Roman Catholicism with African Yoruba traditions. With the Umbanda, in ceremonies that may go on for many hours, a group of mediums uses music and dancing to go into a trance which culminates in spirit possession. The spirits give advice, do laying on of hands, make sacrifices, and dispense amulets to members of the congregation who request healing from them. Akstein has commented, “To be in Brazil is to be in a great hypnosis experiment.”

He trained a group of women who were ballet dancers in self-hypnosis and observed that not only was their performance improved but their personalities changed as well. There was a shy girl who became outgoing and a garrulous girl who became quieter and more reciprocal. With this as a starting point he thought that Brazilian religious kinetic trance dance methodologies might be developed into a form of group psychotherapy. In a T.T.T. group therapy session half the participants dance while the other half watches over them, then they switch, so that everyone gets a chance to dance.

Trance induction: The dancers stand, close their eyes, and focus on one thing – breath, something they want, the cure for their condition, etc. After a minute of this they gradually increase their breath to the fast pace of about forty times a minute. When they have reached this speed, they continue with it for about a minute. This changes the concentration of carbon dioxide in the blood. The dancers' heads are tipped forward or backward to further alter perception and, as the music is introduced, the dancers are spun counterclockwise a few times.

Period of movement: 45 minutes of percussive music is played in which the dancers can move spontaneously in any way they want. No words are spoken. A spotter is assigned to each dancer to make sure that no injury occurs and that the dancers don't interfere with one another.

Period of integration: Dancers are helped to lie down and be comfortable. Relaxing music is played. Dancers are encouraged to stay in this state for as long as they want. Usually ten to twenty minutes is enough.

Period of discussion: Dancers are free to discuss the experiences they have had during the trance dance period. They are encouraged to talk about the experiences themselves, without interpretation.

During the movement phase, awareness feels radically different from the waking state. Attention turns inward and dancing becomes spontaneous and automatic, outside of conscious control. The dancer can experience many things found on the phenomenological map of trance depth. The body can feel very large or very small. An individual can experience other worlds filled with things like gods, healers, and stars. Time distortions can occur. The average guess at dance time is fifteen to twenty minutes for a forty-five-minute session. New meanings can emerge, so that life feels renewed. Fusion with the music can occur. The dancer feels that he or she is one with the music. Some dancers develop mild anesthesia in the arms and the hands. Sometimes brief periods of catalepsy can occur, where the dancer cannot move his or her arms. Lucid recall of archaic memories can occur or reenactments of early developmental behaviors like learning to walk. Dancers quite often report that they see the same thing with their eyes open or closed. Partial amnesia can make recall of the session sketchy, particularly when there has been a great deal of emotional release.

Doug Morgan writes, "When employing T.T.T. as a health-oriented process, relatively rapid results are found, and occasionally quite surprising results are seen after only one session. Some of these include improved orgasmic release, reactivation of menstrual flow following a long period of amenorrhea, being able to cry again after many years of dryness, the discovery of inner self-helpers, and the immediate and lasting improvement in chronic asthma." (*T.T.T.: An Introduction to Trance Dancing* [Lantzville, British Columbia: Ship Cottage Press, 1988], 26–27)

People very often have spiritual experiences during T.T.T. Some of these include an increased sense of meaning, an increased sense of a greater power in one's life, and an increased realization of one's identity as a spiritual being. These can be a surprise to those who have no spiritual intentions and can even be somewhat disruptive in their lives.

Frank Natale's Trance Dance

In 1967 Frank Natale co-founded Phoenix House in New York, one of the largest residential treatment facilities for chemical dependency in the United States. He served as its clinical director for twelve years. After that he focused his work on people who want to experience new levels of spirituality, creativity, and aliveness. He founded an organization, the Natale Institute for Experiential Education, to give seminars to international audiences on life skills such as Relationships, Sexuality, Self-esteem, and The Wisdom of Midlife. In the early 1980s he became interested in shamanism. "I discovered timeless cross-cultural practices such as drumming, mandala and mask making, Trance Dancing, ritual dance, journeying for Spirit animals, 'listening to the whispers of our ancestors,' soul hunting, power objects, chanting, and psychoactive teacher plants." (Frank Natale, *Trance Dance: The Dance of Life* [Rockport MA: Element Books, 1995], ix) He tells us that these are the original practices of a religion more ancient than any of our current major religions. They offer a way of return to being energized and alive, to being fully satisfied with being a human being in a human body. The needs for enlightenment and out-of-body bliss are replaced with love of life as the human spirit returns to the human body. Breathing and moving from the heart brings orgasmic passion and ecstatic healing. Natale himself underwent this process. From spending large amounts of time in abstracted meditation where his body began to break down, his friendships began to disappear, and his interests became tenuous, he spent his time in shamanic trance dancing where his ability to laugh, sing, make love, be with friends, and live with vitality returned. He says that for various reasons parts of our soul have been lost as we grow up. When we dance, we invite the primal Spirit power to return and dwell in us. We become one with its dance and begin to live from its vital reality.

Natale wrote and performed his own music for trance dancing. He issued a number of albums as Professor Trance and the Energizers. When trance dancing, you first put a bandana on over the eyes. It is better if it is covered with symbols that are meaningful to you. You then stand loosely with knees slightly bent and do the Breath of Fire for a minimum of three to five minutes. This is a pattern of breathing with two inhalations through the nose and one exhalation through the mouth. The first inhalation fills up part of the lungs, the second fills up the rest of the lungs. Then the air is exhaled through the mouth. It can be done slowly or quickly, though quickly will bring more energy to the body and the blood. Having altered consciousness through breathing, the music begins and you move according to the thoughts and feelings that emerge within you. Tears, joy, laughter, pain, fear, and sadness all may come from within you and be expressed in movement and in making sounds. After a time, a vibration will move through your body. This passionate energy will take over. Movements will begin to be involuntary. Consciousness begins to transcend time and space. Spirit energy lives in you and you become one with its dance. Your body may seem to transform and you may have visions of spirit animals, scenes of nature, or tribal rituals.

Some of the benefits of trance dancing include a sense of lightness, satisfaction with life, feelings of well-being, deep guiltless sex, a willingness to appreciate and support others, trust that Spirit is real, and healing of lifelong disease patterns. Trance dancers say that they perceive life with a new significance. When they go deeply into trance, they experience no separation and become one with everything. The usual trance dance is about 45 minutes long. Some of the deepest states may not be reached except in intensives where dancing can go on for hours and there is a facilitator there to help with the process.

There is a relationship between Natale's Trance Dance and Terpsichore Trance Therapy. Some of the passages in Natale's book *Trance*

Dance: The Dance of Life are derived from passages that appear in Doug Morgan's *T.T.T. – An Introduction to Trance Dancing*.

Here are some descriptions of what it is like to do Natale's Trance Dancing:

> "Trance Dance was divine. I felt like I was radiating pure love. I found the same freedom, joy, bliss and love that I experience when I am serving others. It is what you wrote about, unconditional love. Connecting to our primal experience we see we are love and light encased in a form. Movement allows us to release, share and receive that love, light and life force. That was so opening. I see its healing powers. I experienced them. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you!" Angela, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

> "It's hard to put into words, but my trance dance experience was totally liberating, as if I left on a marvelous ecstatic trip. Without any outside distraction I was able to journey to new heights within my body and mind that I could only dream of otherwise. It's like reaching a wonderful altered state safely and enjoying it for a nice long while. The Natale trance dance is a perfect companion to my yoga practice. I experience a state of oneness, peace and elation with the breathing and ecstatic movements and can really let everything go." Alyse, Woodland Hills, California

> "When I Trance Dance, I feel safe and secure, which allows me to turn off my mind so my body can flow with the music. As a yoga teacher I am well aware that we hold blockages (mental, emotional, physical) in our bodies and in these Trance Dance sessions I am able to dance and feel deeply so my body just moves with the music. After the final relaxation, I always feel like I had a delicious massage and feel cleansed

and renewed. Children get how important it is to move the body and be in the flow and as adults we have forgotten. This is an experience I wish everyone would try." Celeste, Tulsa, Oklahoma

"Trance Dance takes courage. Blindfolded, you strip yourself of expectations and agendas and allow Frank Natale's music to be the conduit for transformation. You slowly unwind, relax and let the beat carry you into a subconscious awakening. Time is suspended and the line between dreams and reality becomes blurred. In the most amazing way possible you are living the moment, yet watching it unfold from somewhere else. Your body moves to the rhythm and the chanting until you are no longer in charge. It is in there, in that dance, real freedom comes; true fearlessness with no judgment. Natale's music is key to taking participants to that deep, deep level of being. And it is here that all possibilities for transformation and healing can and do occur." Jan, San Pedro, California

"My daughter was 10 when we had our first Trance Dance experience. I remember giving her a stern motherly look before we tied our bandanas around our eyes, as if to say, 'Just because I can't see you doesn't mean I'm not watching.' About thirty minutes into dancing and having a good time, I peeked – I had to – at my girl. I wanted to know if she was into it. And she was, crawling around the floor and in a completely different place than where I was and DEFINITELY didn't need supervision! Later she said she liked being all the different animals. I didn't know what she meant. I did the Trance Dance Training a few months later, and I understood what she meant. In that intensive, I rode on a turtle's back, I WAS a turtle, a wild boar ran at me and turned away at the last possible second, I was a human

sacrifice dancing into a fire and completely unafraid. 'Oh, The Places You'll Go' in Trance Dance! I was so grateful my daughter had such an opening, an experience of life beyond the boundaries of skin and rationality, or whatever, at such a young age. I know she'll always remember being all the animals the same way I'll always remember my experiences. What they mean, I'm not sure, but look where they lead – to liberation from limitation – a real EXPERIENCE of that! Frank Natale and Ralph Cissne led that intensive. At one point we were practicing 'soul hunting' and lying on the floor. A woman near me began crying hysterically and I was annoyed. I didn't 'believe' her. I thought she was putting on some kind of show. Then Frank kneeled beside me and lightly pressed on my sternum. Tears and sobs came pouring out of me uncontrollably. His pressure didn't hurt at all; it was just as if my sternum was labeled 'Press here to make her cry.' I asked later why he did that, and Frank said he was just led to. Frank Natale knew what he was doing. I trusted him. He had no patience for ego. He'd get it out of you the way he was led to get it out of you. For me it was pressing on my sternum. I watched him use different techniques with others in the room, and until it was your turn, it was hard to really understand what was going on, like the woman next to me, crying. But the trust had already been established, so you knew when it finally was your turn that you could completely let go and be who you were meant to be." Rosie, San Pedro, California

"I was introduced to Trance Dance by Frank Natale in 1991 when I was 21 and had a one-year-old daughter. I discovered the value of letting my body move just the way it wanted, a relief to move without the need to please anybody. Total freedom! I participated in the Trance Dance presenters training in Amsterdam with over 40 others as Frank guided

us for hours and hours of dancing. It was amazing! After phases of boredom, physical tiredness and annoyance my body totally took over and began to move in a way I had never experienced. My body became more relaxed and ongoing problems disappeared. After a couple of days of breathing and dancing to the rhythms of all kinds of music my emotions and my mind also relaxed. It was such joy to dance and I felt like I never wanted to stop. And out of this experience suddenly an incredible power raised up my spine. My body was dancing wildly and then it was like an inner explosion of pure ecstasy! I felt totally uplifted, my whole body somehow transformed into energy. No sense of time or space, pure dancing, pure being. I had no idea how many hours had passed when Frank finished the session. I lay down to rest on the floor, totally still and silent without any movement, without any thought. When the other participants returned, I sat down for the group sharing. I felt totally happy, totally at ease and totally newborn, but was unable to speak. There were no words to express what I had experienced! Later I received a letter from Frank telling me that my energy had been awakened. Although I faced many different private problems by that time, whenever I danced, I got back into my power. Now, at aged 42, I still appreciate Trance Dance as one of the most powerful ways to reconnect with your life force. Thank you, Frank, for giving such a wonderful and enduring gift to my life!" Katharina, Vienna, Austria

Frank Natale died in Hawaii in 2002. Below is an appreciation by one of his colleagues, Kutira Décosterd. Kutira is an author, musician, artist, and spiritual mentor whose focus has been on environmental sustainability and embodied spirituality. She co-founded the Kahua Hawaiian Institute to explore and teach new ways of awakening the divine, opening the heart, and cre-

ating ecological sustainability both within and without. Along with her husband, Raphael, an internationally famous musician, she created the Maui Eco Retreat, a sustainable organic paradise in Hawaii. People from all over the world come there to vacation, work on personal transformation, and learn the arts of sustainable living. She presides as an advisory board member to several organizations, both national and international, that promote spiritual advancement, sustainability, food security and conscious land use.

"Tribute to a Master," by Kutira

In loving memory of a great friend, shaman and healer Frank Natale aka "Professor Trance".

Three days before leaving Hawaii for a 5-week teaching and concert tour on the mainland I received a package in the mail with a crystal sperm whale and card saying:

"Dear Kutira, Whale Child – Although we have not spent time together too often I have often felt you. I go now to another world. I'm blessed to have known you – Frank."

I was touched by the fact that it was a sperm whale he had sent me. It is rare to find the sperm whale depicted in any form and especially in crystal. It is a whale I studied when I worked with Dr. John C. Lilly. It has the largest brain of all the whales and hence the largest mammal brain on the planet. It is a very special whale in shamanic practices.

I read the card again and again and it took me awhile to understand and acknowledge that Frank's spirit was preparing for transition. Especially the sentence, "I'm blessed to have known you" shook me deeply, because it was written in the past tense.

I called his home in Honolulu and spoke with his wife, who told me that she is pregnant and due to deliver at the end of June. She explained to me that Frank had decided in May that it was time to leave his body and he chose June 21, his birthday and the time of the solstice, to leave this world. The solstice is known to his students around the world as a great trance dance gathering and ritual time. He also felt it was better to depart with spirit before the newborn baby came into this world.

I booked the earliest flight out of Maui to be with Frank and, honestly, to find out if he could really just say goodbye and leave his body. It was challenging to feel, see and embrace death and birth in such a close manner.

Walking through his living room made it clear that this journey was planned well ahead. His entire collection of Shaman tools were selected and labeled to go to many of his students to carry on his teaching. Some of them were wrapped with a loving note, some of them were ready to be boxed and send as far as Europe. Feathers, masks, shakers, blankets, crystals, all of them empowered by many rituals and journeys into altered states of consciousness. I found the place on the altar where the crystal sperm whale came from. I was awed that Frank had all this awareness and loving energy to prepare his death and even after. He thought it truly through to the end and beyond. I remember when Dr. John C. Lilly got closer to his final journey that when I brought up the subject about how he would like to prepare for his journey that this was not a subject to talk about. When my father died only a year before John, he gave me all the advice and help on how he wanted to leave his body and how he wanted to have his funeral be taken care of. He dictated his eulogy to me and my sister. He also left his body consciously. Half an hour before he took his last breath, for me it was the longest exhale, he called all his brothers and sisters to tell them to be loving to each other and only love will count. He died at home, like Frank, in the loving arms of his whole family.

I know that Frank was calling his family to be close to them and letting them take the last ride with him. Literally his time was clicking by and each day was getting him closer to June 21.

Sitting at the side of his bed was an extraordinary experience. To be with him and tap into the vastness of surrender. I asked him if it was, as we teach in Tantra that "surrender is the key to ecstasy," one of Raphael's favorite quotes and teachings. He agreed. We spoke a lot about letting go, surrender, death and birth and I was glad I recorded my last conversation with a great friend and explorer of consciousness. He said: "As I get closer to death the more I feel my feminine side, death is a feminine experience". He also said that the Ayahuasca has prepared him to embrace death with all the awareness and love he has now.

As I was sitting beside his bed he put in my hands and let me hold the shaker he received many years ago from Padrinho Valedeccie a shaman from the Amazon. This shaker is said to be from Master Raimundo Irineu an Amazonian Jaguar Shaman and founder of the Santo Daime Doctrine. Holding this powerful shaker, I had chills running up and down my spine. This shaker had a life of its own and I felt it shaking me. Suddenly Frank asked me "Can you handle the 'Queen of the Forest'?" a statue he also was given by one of the shamans in the Amazon. There she was, right opposite his bed looking straight at him, with a crown on her head and a wand in her hand. The blessed Mother with an Indian face. Ancient and powerful. "I was wondering to whom she will go, but now I know it is you." At this point I was speechless, but my mind was shouting no that's not for me. He asked me to get her, to touch her, and it was in that moment I felt yes! she was going home with me and she had been waiting for me.

As we sat pressing our foreheads together, I knew instantly that we would meet again. He said he is coming back as a woman and his

religion will be earth-centered creation. Most likely as an artist he said. We laughed and I told him I would watch out for her.

Frank Natale died, as he said he would, on June 21, 2002, at 9:55 PM in his home in Honolulu of kidney and liver failure.

Frank, I am blessed to have known you. — Kutira

P.S. When I came home Raphael had just received the message that he was chosen to work on a CD of music inspired by Padrihno Alfredo brother to Padrihno Valdeccie who gave Frank the shaker. Irineu was their grandfather. It was clear to both of us that the 'Queen of the Forest' had found her place, for now.

(The CD is called "Healing Light of the Amazon," by Raphael, www.KahuaRecords.com. The Santo Daime Doctrine is a set of religious teachings based on the ritual use of the psychedelic ayahuasca, rechristened Santo Daime. It contains elements of Christian, African, and Indigenous thought and aims to unite the individual with God, nourish the community, and preserve the rain forest.)

Trance Dance International

In 1981 Wilbert Alix became the director of the Natale Institute for Experiential Education; he was the first person to be trained by Frank Natale in the programs offered by the Institute. Nearly twenty years later in 1999 Alix founded Trance Dance International and over the years he has established on-going Trance Dance programs in some 44 countries around the world. (See videos of Wilbert Alix on YouTube.)

Alix grew up in New Orleans in a place that is recognized as the oldest African American neighborhood in the United States. He

writes, "My childhood memory is filled with nights when I gathered with friends in the streets of my old neighborhood, utilizing anything to make rhythmic beats, creating endless variations of long, soulful rhythms that I now know induce trance." In the sixties and early seventies he worked as a community organizer. In the late seventies and eighties he was a medical researcher. In the early nineties he was president of a nonprofit mental health center in Austin, Texas. Around the turn of the century he began to bring Trance Dance to the world full time. Part of the year he lives in the wine country north of Lisbon, Portugal, the rest of the year he lives in Austin.

Trance Dance International has offered a variety of trainings:

Trance Dance—Entering Your Body/Mind Consciousness. Transformational breathing techniques and dancing to healing sounds done while wearing a blindfold to block out the visual world and tune ourselves to the music. A blend of ancient ritual and modern technique that leads to the mystical world of our deeper self.

The Spirit Animal Dance—Journeying for Your Power. Surrendering ourselves to spirit animals that show us the way toward a sense of interior wholeness and power.

Rites of Passage—The 12 Mystical Stages of Our Spiritual & Physical Evolution. The 12 "points of transformations" experienced by everyone that guide us towards wisdom and tranquility.

Soul Hunting—Finding the Lost Pieces of Self. There are pieces of ourselves that we have split off and lost because we are too afraid to use them. The more of our self we have lost in this way, the more of our vital power, our soul, we have lost. Through the guided

process of soul hunting we can recapture these pieces and find our sense of vital energy again.

The Ancestors Walk—Pathways to Forgiveness. Walk your genetic path and encounter buried aspects of your ancestral story.

The Trace Dance Ritual – Facilitator Training Program. Some of the topics covered in the facilitator training:

- Trance Dance: Entering Your Body/Mind Consciousness
- Rites of Passage: The 12 Mystical Stages of Our Spiritual & Physical Evolution
- Soul Hunting: Finding the Lost Pieces of Self
- The "ethics" governing working with people in altered states of mind
- The exploration of "spiritual evolution" as a parallel tool to spiritual healing
- The distinct similarities and significant differences between "the mind" and "the brain"
- The History of Shamanism & Trance Dance Rituals
- Contemporary Shamanism & Trance Dance Rituals
- Possession Trance vs. Shamanic Trance
- The technical use of organic & contemporary music to inducing trance states
- Breathing techniques to induce altered states
- How to induce "waking dreams"
- Sensory Deprivation and the Holographic Mind
- The "Faces of Time" Trance Journey
- How to responsibly conduct a Trance Dance Ritual Program

Chapter 14
Helen Bonny's Guided Imagery and Music (GIM)

Helen Bonny, PhD (1921–2010), was a specialist in music therapy and psychological music research. At one point in her career she had a mystical experience while playing "The Swan" by Saint Saëns on the violin. She felt as if she, the music, and the violin had all become one. This formed the basis for her understanding of the importance of music to non-ordinary states of consciousness. During the early seventies she worked at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center integrating music into psychedelic sessions as part of a federal project on the healing effects of LSD. Work with clients who were not taking psychedelics awakened her to the power of music itself, without the addition of LSD, to transform and heal human consciousness. Shortly after the federal project was cancelled, she published with Louis Savary her classic book *Music and Your Mind: Listening with a New Consciousness*, in which she describes the impact of musical selections on individuals in deep relaxation trance. Out of these beginnings she developed the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, a form of psychotherapy that helps a person deal with emotional issues by using classical music selections to evoke inner imagery around the theme being worked on during a therapy session. She created an institute in 1988 to provide training and promote her method. In 2008 the Institute was merged with the Association for Music and Imagery (AMI), the

professional organization for practitioners of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM). There is a professional journal for GIM, a European Association for Music and Imagery (EAMI), and hundreds of practitioners around the world in a wide variety of countries. In 2004 Dr. Bonny donated all of her papers to Temple University, where they have been indexed and are available for research purposes. She died in 2010.

It's interesting to note that after years of avoiding any research on psychedelics because of their legal problems, the kind of work that Dr. Bonny was doing in the early seventies is being taken up again. The Dutch neuroscientist Mendel Kaelen gave a paper, "The Psychological and Neurophysiological Effects of Music in Combination with Psychedelics," at the Psychedelic Science 2017 conference in Oakland, California, in which he presented four years of data from observations of people listening to musical selections during psychedelic sessions. See also Marlene Dobkin de Rios and Fred Katz, "Some Relationships between Music and Hallucinogenic Ritual: The 'Jungle Gym' in Consciousness" (Ethos 3, no. 1 [October 2009]:64–76) for an explanation as to why music is so important to sessions with psychoactive plants. These drugs dissolve ego-boundaries, frequently producing intense anxiety. Music – with its mathematical form and emotional power – provides a structure to hold onto while the world and the self dissolve into hallucinogenic chaos. Because of this ability to provide structure during psychedelic dissolution, what happens during a session can be controlled by the shaman's choice of music, leading to standard, culturally defined psychedelic visions.

Chapter 6 of *Music and Your Mind* is titled "Music and Religious Experience." It gives the results of working with various groups that have spiritual expectations, doing relaxation trance inductions with them, and then playing selected pieces of classical music. (Helen L. Bonny and Louis M. Savary, *Music and Your Mind: Listening with*

a New Consciousness [Barrytown, New York: Station Hill Press, 1973, revised edition 1990])

After a Sunday wedding the second movement of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* and other compositions were played for seven friends in deep relaxation. They all reported a religious experience.

A group of twenty nuns met for a weekend workshop. After participating in a trance listening session one sister reported, "I found myself a part of God, totally existing in him and responding with him …" Another sister reported going out of her body with a sense of lightness and motion: "I was dancing a ballet." Later she had imagery of a religious procession and was filled with joy and a sense of power. Another sister reported imagery of playing ball with God and loving the simplicity of it. Then everything merged into a ballet of praise. When God smiled at this, the whole universe turned yellow-orange. Most of the sisters were enthusiastic about further explorations of worship in altered states of consciousness using music. They found it to be self-revelatory and liberating.

Programs of altered consciousness with music were given at a Transpersonal Psychology Conference in Iceland in 1972. After a guided imagery meditation about individual perceptions of truth, it was suggested that everyone visualize a diamond above their own head, with each diamond rising into the air to form one enormous diamond above the group. Relaxation exercises were given and several musical pieces were played after this, including Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto*, Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*, and Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*. One attendee wrote, "I was filled with an overwhelming sensation of exultation and joy, so vast as to be almost cosmic in scope." Another participant saw each diamond as a star and found himself among them, penetrating deeper and deeper into the night sky. At another part of the program he had an out-of-body experience and no longer heard

the music. Still another person had a mystical experience. He seemed to dissolve into a realm of eternal essence.

Chapter 7 gives several guided imagery exercises that have been helpful in producing spiritual experience. Each exercise has a list of recommended recordings to go with it. Here are my notes on these guided imagery exercises.

Opening the Senses: In the session the guide suggests that the music takes you to a place where you can explore touching and feeling various textures and surfaces. Sensory adventures are suggested. This can be done with other senses as well.

My Flower: In the session the guide suggests that the music takes you on a search for a special flower, one that is uniquely your flower. When you find it, you will be able to communicate with it and it will reveal the depths of meaning it holds for your life. It will become your guide.

The Love Collector: In the session the guide suggests that the music takes you to some person that you like very much or who likes you very much. Move close and feel the love vibration between the two of you. Find more people and do the same. Surrounded by loving people, you feel the love vibration expand and grow. You know that everywhere in the universe you are loved and accepted.

Loving a Nobody: In the session the guide suggests that the music takes you to a place where you find a nobody, someone no one cares about. Invisible to him, you look into his eyes and read the lines of his face. His history unfolds to you and concern and compassion well up within you. Let love energy flow through you until he is reborn.

The Truth Diamond: Before the session the Tibetan parable of the Truth Diamond is read: A prophet holds up a huge Truth Diamond above his head and it shatters into a million sparkling pieces. People scavenge pieces of the diamond, treasure them, and defend them as their own. Each has a fragment of the truth, but not the whole truth. There are no suggestions during the musical selection.

A Love Supreme: In the session the guide plays the "Psalm" track from John Coltrane's album *A Love Supreme* and reads the psalm written by Coltrane.

Hymns and Spiritual Songs: In the session the guide plays hymns or choir music, letting the music take you wherever it will.

Gratitude: In the session the guide suggests that the music takes you to places where the forces of growth are most at work. See these forces as a gift from the loving Source. Formulate a word or gesture of gratitude for each force you can feel.

At-one-ment: In the session the guide suggests that the music allows you to find links between objects. You build and build until all objects are linked into a single whole. You add people to the whole until everyone and everything is linked in unity. Everyone is linked in reconciliation. Shouts of joy rise up in the whole from the feeling of oneness.

Cosmic Vibrations: In the session the guide suggests that the music reveals to you that the universe is one vast vibrating cosmos. See an individual element as part of the cosmic vibration and then add others until you see the whole universe as one vast vibrating fullness. You integrate with it and the music shows you the meaning of these vibrations.

In order to make sure that the compositions chosen for play during the sessions have a clear mood, mood adjectives were organized into eight groups and the compositions were rated on the groups by different sets of subjects. The mood groups of adjectives were 1. Spiritual, 2. Sad, 3. Dreamy, 4. Lyrical, 5 Playful, 6. Joyous, 7. Exciting, 8. Vigorous. The adjectives in the 1. Spiritual group were, for example: spiritual, lofty, awe-inspiring, dignified, sacred, solemn, sober, serious. Appendix C gives about seventy suggested recordings for altered-states-of-consciousness experience in a table that includes composer and title, length of the composition, mood group number, and comments on the composition.

Chapter 15
Image Streaming

By image streaming I mean a dialogue between the guide and the client where the client is verbally reporting inner imagery, imagery that is very much like what you encounter in dreams. It includes a steady stream of visual images, voices giving narrative, scraps of speech, emotions, feelings in the body, etc.

Hypnosis is frequently done in a very relaxed state where the client is communicating in whispered answers or by an ideomotor movement like a finger twitch which has been given a meaning such as "yes" or "no." Image streaming is a more active form of trance where the client gives a full verbal report on his or her inner imagery. Trance is not necessarily a deeply relaxed state. Relaxation is one way of reaching trance. But having reached the deep somnambulistic level of hypnotic trance via relaxation or some other method, it is possible to open one's eyes and move around. For example, in a stage hypnosis show you might see someone do a jig or try to sing like Frank Sinatra.

On my phenomenological map of trance depth, one begins to think in images at the deep trance level. One way to reach deep trance, then, is to simply immerse yourself in your own inner imagery and begin reporting on it. It is possible to reach a deep level by allowing yourself to think and report in images.

The Australian Technique

Gerald M. Glaskin (1923–2000) was a prolific Australian novelist. In 1971 he came across an obscure Western Australian spiritual magazine called *Open Mind*. One of the articles in the magazine was titled, "A Method to Remember Past Lives." A friend told him that she knew a person who had tried it and that it worked astonishingly well. Intrigued, Glaskin decided to try it himself with the help of his friend. Using the technique, he had a half-hour vision which he says was perfectly clear in every detail, every shade of color and nuance of feeling. Afterward, the vision did not fade in his memory. He thought of it two or three times a day, remembering the vividness of its details and its colors. He began experimenting with other people and eventually wrote three books about the technique.

Gerald M. Glaskin, *Windows of the Mind: Exploring the Christos Technique of Mind Travel*, Prism Press, 1974
Gerald M. Glaskin, *Worlds Within: Probing the Christos Experience*, London: Wildwood House, 1976
Gerald M. Glaskin, *A Door to Infinity: Proving the Christos Experience*, London: Wildwood House, 1979

The procedure

The mind traveler lies flat on his back on the floor with shoes off and a cushion under his head, eyes closed. The ankles are massaged for two or three minutes to loosen and relax them. While the ankles are being massaged another person massages the "third eye" area of the forehead in a circular motion with the edge of his curved hand. The forehead massage should be a vigorous rubbing until the traveler feels like his head is almost buzzing.

Instructions for the guide:

Say to the traveler, visualize your feet.
Visualize yourself growing two inches beyond the bottoms of your feet.
Tell me when you feel two inches taller.
Now see or feel your feet returning to their normal position.

Repeat this procedure several times.

Have the traveler expand two inches beyond his head, tell you that he has done so, and then return to normal height. Repeat several times.

Do the procedure with the feet again, but now expand by 12 inches.

Do the procedure with the head, going 12 inches beyond the head.

Have the traveler expand 24 inches beyond the feet, but do not ask him to return to normal size.

Have the traveler expand 24 inches beyond the head, while his feet are still expanded by 24 inches, so that he is stretched in both directions. If he has trouble with this, keep repeating until he says he has gotten it.

Now feel yourself growing in all directions, expanding out of yourself like an enormous balloon.

You are standing in front of your front door. Describe it in full.

Ask him questions so that he also tells you about the surroundings, what he is standing on, and what he sees when he looks up.

Imagine you are standing on top of your roof. What do you see when you look down?

Ask him questions so that he describes details.

Go straight up in the air about 500 yards. What do you see now?

Turn slowly in a complete circle and describe everything you see.

What time of day is it?

If it is daytime, have him change it to nighttime and describe the scene.

Change back again and compare the daytime and the nighttime.

Who is changing daytime to nighttime and back again?

He will say essentially, "I am." This will give him a sense of agency over the vision, which will be important later.

Come down and land feet first in a past life. Make sure the sun is shining so you can see everything.

Describe your feet.

What kind of ground are you standing on?

Look around and describe what you see.

Keep asking questions about details until he is firmly locked on where he is. Watch the eyes for rapid eye movements. These indicate a good vision.

Don't ask suggestive questions. Do ask simple questions that elicit detail.

The preliminary process usually takes about twenty minutes. The vision itself lasts about a half hour to forty-five minutes. The traveler will underestimate the time taken. He will tell you that the experience took about a quarter of the time that it actually did.

The vision story will come to a logical conclusion. The traveler will become quiet. You can ask if he would like to proceed to the experience of death or return directly to everyday life. It is his choice.

Comments: See my phenomenological map of trance depth. Body distortions of growing or shrinking appear during medium trance. Requesting expansion of the feet and the head is a way to induce these body distortions.

"Now feel yourself growing in all directions, expanding out of yourself like an enormous balloon."

Expansion of the whole body is generally a deep trance experience.

Rising to your rooftop and 500 yards into the air are types of floating and flying. Feelings of floating and flying generally occur during deep trance.

Describing your front door and its surroundings is a way to intensify the process of experiencing sensory imagery. You start with the very familiar, which is easy to imagine and describe. Through the guide's questioning you continue to experience image after image until you begin thinking in images, a phenomenon that appears in deep trance.

When subjects emerge from a hypnotic state, they usually spontaneously underestimate the amount of time they were in the trance. This is a well-known phenomenon of hypnotic time distortion. We can suspect that these mind traveler visions are some form of hypnotic trance then, since the same time distortion effect appears with the visions, too.

CASE STUDY

The visions can be extraordinarily rich and detailed. This vision that Glaskin reports in A Door to Eternity (p. 103) can be summarized in a few sentences. He sees a rhinoceros in South Africa; then he sees his mother taking washing off a clothesline; he has an intergalactic journey; and finally, he is "a lonely coalmine superintendent investigating a mine disaster in particularly bleak surroundings in the nineteenth century." Each of these episodes has an astonishing amount of detail, however. The rhinoceros is standing straight in front of him and over its head he can see the full length of its body along its backbone. The sun is shining on a lake behind the rhinoceros, making its surface into a dazzling sheet of light. The rhino advances a little closer and begins to run toward him. He is in the back of a vehicle, perhaps a truck, that begins to move away. The grass that he can see is dry and yellowish. It has been crushed down flat earlier

on by the rhinoceros. The rhino is left behind and the vehicle he is in takes off like a helicopter, going up into the sky. Looking up, he feels like he is looking into blinding sunlight. Through the sunlight an ordinary washing line appears, and the next episode of the vision begins.

Comments: Glaskin has compared these visions to lucid dreams. The traveler is fully awake and the dream stories are extraordinarily rich and real. The technique puts the focus on past lives through expectation, but there isn't any reason why these waking dreams can't be directed toward spiritual experience. For example, you could suggest that the traveler come down at some moment in his current life or a past life when he was having a peak experience, a moment of ecstasy and spiritual transcendence. The death experiences that Glaskin relates from his mind travelers are rich in similarities to near-death experiences, too. Hence, they have many parallels to mystical experience. As you know from my article "Hypnotic Simulation of Near-Death Experience," about two-thirds of near-death experiences are rated as mystical experiences. I have used the Australian technique without the massage of the ankles and the forehead, and it still works pretty well.

The Inner Source

Michael L. Emmons
The Inner Source: A Guide to Meditative Therapy, San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers, 1978

This is one of my favorite books. Michael Emmons was a counseling psychologist and a professor at the California Polytechnic State University. He was also one of the pioneers in assertiveness training. In *The Inner Source* he tells us that inside each of us is a powerful source of help, a wisdom that can guide us in healing. It has had many names: "… the deep self, the overself, the superconscious, the higher self, the

biological wisdom, the river, the subliminal self, the God-within, the oversoul, the not-self, the Christ consciousness" (p. 4). The tendency has been to kickstart this wisdom into activity with things like guided imagery, mantras, music, dance, light and sound machines, psychedelic drugs, and sensory isolation. But there is an entirely natural way of getting in touch with the Inner Source, a way that totally trusts the Inner Source and lets it make all healing decisions.

During a therapy session you simply close your eyes and describe out loud any experience of inner imagery that takes place. You pay close attention to three areas: feelings in your body, your inner visual field, and your thought processes. By doing this you begin to experience the inner wisdom unfolding.

Emmons divides inner imagery into three different types – physiological, psychological, and spiritual. Here are some of the things that can appear when you look inward and begin reporting.

> **Physiological**—Warmth, coldness, dizziness, headaches, crying, stomach gurgles, aches, pains, body distortion, eye movements, itching, tastes, smells, tingling, numbness, swelling, stiffness, perspiration, sleep, hunger, alterations in breathing, brainwave alterations, heart rate changes, spinning, floating, sexual sensations, coughing, yawning, sneezing.
>
> **Psychological**—Enthusiasm, fear, joy, humor, grief, surprise, upset, thoughts, depression, passion, aggression, anger, loneliness, guilt, memories of childhood, sexual feelings, reliving accidents, reliving psychological traumas, reexperiencing pleasant events, clairvoyance, precognition, telepathy, out-of-body experiences, euphoria, reincarnation experiences, reactions to pain, insecurity, hope, images of self.

Spiritual—Light, rainbows, churches, crosses, mandalas, stars, fish, water, earth, air, fire, stained glass, triangles, darkness, devils, angels, peak experiences, eyes, love, feelings of cosmic consciousness, circles, religious figures such as Jesus, Buddha, or saints, yin and yang, oceanic feelings, temples, reverence, numbers, bliss, visions, galaxies, peace, still small voice, experiencing God.

CASE STUDY

Jack was a Vietnam War veteran who had had a war trauma about three years previously. A platoon leader, he ordered a man to go forward and he was cut down by enemy fire. Jack had to see him bleed out but was unable to do anything for him; he could not save the soldier. When he knew the man was dead, he went crazy and had to be restrained. In present time he would cry, hyperventilate, and become emotionally upset when something reminded him of the incident. Emmons first taught him deep muscle relaxation and started him on systematic desensitization, but he would become upset and come out of deep relaxation when he got close to visualizing the trauma scene. Emmons switched to Inner Source work. Nothing occurred relevant to the trauma until the middle of the third session. Jack became discouraged and said he felt he was getting nowhere. Emmons asked if the Inner Source could give some hint about why progress was being blocked. Jack then experienced a scene in which he was flailing with a blanket around his head. This shifted to a scene in which he was under a dark cloud but knew that it was bright and sunny up above. Emmons asked him if he knew why the sun was blocked out. Jack started crying, yelling, and writhing, reexperiencing the event that had been haunting him. After a few minutes of this he began experiencing a powerful energy moving down his body. “Oh wow! It’s like this huge blob of energy, just working its way down my body. I can actually feel it; it’s going down my left leg now! Oh wow! It’s unbelievable. Oh, I just feel so

good!" After about half an hour of this energy moving through his body, he opened his eyes, they chatted, and the session terminated. A week later he reported that the energy had come back a few times during the week, but it was not as strong as in the therapy session. He felt ecstatically released from the trauma. Life was beautiful. At a six-month follow-up he reported that reactions to the Vietnam War incident were *Very Much Improved*, which was the highest possible score.

Discussion of the case: Asking why therapy is blocked is something that is very similar to the questioning that happens during a hypnosis session. The blanket and the dark cloud are dramatic answers from the unconscious mind. The writhing and reexperiencing of the trauma is an abreaction phenomenon, a cathartic healing process. The energy moving down through the body sounds like something out of modern-day energy psychology. It rings a bell with me because I know a woman who used to be an alcoholic. She told me that she went to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings all the time. One day, when she was praying to her higher power for help with her condition, huge amounts of energy entered her head and moved down her body. This went on for several minutes. After it was over, she never drank again. Her experience is certainly in the tradition of AA. Bill W., one of the co-founders of AA, originally got sober through a mystical experience of divine love.

Emmons again and again emphasizes that the Inner Source knows all about the individual, has incredible healing powers at its disposal, and is totally trustworthy. It will make correct decisions on how to go about healing an individual. This implies that the Inner Source is connected to the transcendent in some way. Other names he gives for it are the superconscious, the higher self, the God-within, etc.

Emmons gave a questionnaire to his clients to fill out after they completed therapy. Twenty-five percent felt the therapy was a religious

experience. Thirty-one percent felt that they had a greater awareness of God, a higher power, or ultimate reality. Thirty-six percent said that their feelings about religion had changed. For example, some felt more aware of spiritual needs or had more faith in a beneficent spiritual world. Forty percent said that the therapy was the greatest thing that had ever happened to them.

If we restrict ourselves to scientific materialism rather than a belief in spiritual reality, we can find an explanation for the *Inner Source* in expectation. Emmons describes the workings of the Inner Source to the client, how it knows all about the individual, has incredible healing powers, and is totally trustworthy. He then brings the client into a trance state by immersing that person in inner imagery. The unconscious mind of the client takes on the suggested role of the Inner Source. It really does know everything about the person and according to expectation it begins to heal the individual.

Chapter 6 is on Light. Aldous Huxley says that light is the major divine symbol for all religions. In a mystical experience, he says, everything is frequently shining with light. Emmons cites light experiences from the sacred writings of several different religions: Christianity, Taoism, the Bhagavad Gita, The Book of the Dead, etc. In a sample of 75 Inner Source clients Emmons noted the following. Eighty-three percent had an experience of light. For example, "I keep getting flashes, like sheet lightning." "Like light radiating from concentric circles." Sixty percent had light-dark interactions. "Light and dark that swirls around like clouds …." Nineteen percent experienced a bright color. "Very bright red on the left." Forty-four percent had a bright light. "Like I'm waking up, real bright, like I'm looking at the sun with my eyes closed." None of his subjects had the experience of a *very* bright light, familiar from Wolfgang Luthe's autogenic abreaction work. This is an intense brightness, a feeling of boundless space, and a sense of euphoria, liberation, and completeness. Emmons says that as we utilize the Inner Source we

begin to work through our own darkness and become more and more filled with light. We can experience the same light that we thought reserved to great souls like Jesus and Buddha. Emmons himself has experienced some of this transformation. "After I have slept for a number of hours, I will at times awaken to a shining source" (p. 144). Sometimes it is a bright sun, squares of light, or other forms. It comes about once a month. Its presence reassures him that he is on the right path.

History of Imagery Techniques

Imagery work has an extensive history. Not being an expert, I can only point you in some directions to explore on your own.

Mary Watkins, *Waking Dreams*, 4th ed., Fairfax, CA: Human Development Books, 2014

Martha Crampton, *Guided Imagery*: *A Psychosynthesis Approach, History and Manual for Practitioners*, 3rd ed., Amherst, MA: Synthesis Center Publishing, 2005, www.synthesiscenter.org

"Waking Dream Therapy," Colette Aboulker-Muscat and Robert Desoille, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJMbmtyHuPI&feature=youtu.be

The International Network for the Study of Waking Dream Therapy,http://www.wakingdreamtherapy.org/

Chapter 16
Core Transformation

Connirae Andreas and Tamara Andreas

Connirae Andreas, PhD, is an internationally known master of Neuro Linguistic Programming. She is the co-author of many books on NLP including *Heart of the Mind*, *Frogs into Princes*, and *Trance-Formations*. Her books have been translated into fifteen languages. She is best known for her creation of the Core Transformation Process. Starting from some difficult part of oneself, the process leads to the discovery of the spiritual feeling state that that part is missing. When the spiritual feeling state is experienced, it can be used to transform the person toward a sense of inner wholeness. Based on my own involvement in working with the Core Transformation Process, I can tell you that it is a really powerful technique that can lead to a spiritual transformation in one's life.

Tamara Andreas is Connirae Andreas' sister. Together the two co-authored the book *Core Transformation: Reaching the Wellspring Within*. She has been doing international training in the method for over twenty years.

Parts

A part of me makes me (do)____, and I'd like to stop.
A part of me makes me (feel)____, and I'd like to stop.
A part of me makes me (think)____, and I'd like to stop.

For example, Tom has a part of himself that is a very critical inner voice. It criticizes him, his wife, and his colleagues. He would like to stop criticizing, but it feels out of his control. He has a hard time restraining it. He is constantly fighting himself.

Parts have a positive purpose

Through the Core Transformation Process Tom learned that this part of himself is not just a drag on his life, it has a positive purpose. It is trying to make his life more fulfilled by telling him what is not working so that he can fix it. This realization made a big difference to Tom. He stopped hating himself so much.

To be whole is the goal

Wholeness is the state where all our different parts are working together harmoniously to enhance our life, instead of one part trying to kill off another part or one part trying to grab all the attention to the exclusion of the other parts.

Parts have deeper-level purposes that can be arranged in a chain

When you ask a part, "What do you want through having reached your purpose?" it will go on to a deeper level, to something more basic and important. So, when Tom asked his critical voice, "What do you want through making me fulfilled?" it said, "Making you successful." "What do you want through making me successful?"

It said, "Making you respected." "What do you want by making me respected?" It said, "Making you loved." "What do you want through making me loved?" It said, "You will have inner peace when you are loved."

When Tom was growing up, he got the idea that to have inner peace he had to be loved, and to be loved he had to be respected, and to be respected he had to be successful, and to be successful he had to fulfill his potential, and to fulfill his potential he had to be really critical.

The five Core feeling states

When you follow the chain of deeper-level purposes, at the end of the chain you arrive at one of five Core feeling states. A Core state is the deepest level of what our parts want for us. Core states are states of being. They do not depend on anything else for their value.

Being:	**Feeling real, present, fully here**
Inner Peace:	**Having calmness and tranquility within, in all sorts of surroundings**
Love:	**Unconditional love that radiates to everyone and everything**
OKness:	**A deep sense of worthiness that arises from just being alive**
Oneness:	**An incredible sense of oneness with everything – a euphoria of absolute unity with all life**

Core states are not in relation to anything else. They are states of inner being. You cannot get something, or do something, or be free from something to be in a Core feeling state. Feeling present, or worthy, or loving, or peaceful, or at one with everything arises from within. Because these states slip away from us as we get lost in the intricacies of everyday life, our parts imagine there are

things we can do to get them back. Tom's critical voice imagines that if Tom is loved, he will have a deep unshakable feeing of inner peace. When you are developing a chain of positive purposes with a part and you reach a Core state, the part will say, "There isn't any more," or it will repeat the Core state, or it will start talking about the consequences of having the Core state.

Transform the part using its Core feeling state

Choose a part of yourself to work with and discover its positive purpose by asking it, "What do you want?" Then develop the chain of purposes until you reach a Core feeling state. To do this ask the part, "If you have the current purpose fully and completely fulfilled, what do you want, through having it, that's even more important?" When you reach the Core state – a feeling of being intensely real, peaceful, loving, worthy, or one with all things – spend time with it so that you enjoy it fully and completely. A Core state is a feeling that cannot be earned, but it can be experienced. So, invite the part to experience the Core feeling and ask, "When you just have the Core state as a deep feeling, a way of being in the world, how does that make things different?" Then work backward on the chain of intended outcomes using the Core feeling to transform each outcome.

Tom's critical voice ultimately wanted Tom to experience the Core feeling of inner peace. So, after enjoying inner peace for a while, Tom asked the transformative question, "When you just have the deep feeling of inner peace, how does that make things different?" The part answered that it took the pressure off. It didn't have to be insistently critical, since the goal was already reached. Then Tom worked back through the chain of outcomes, transforming each one through the Core feeling of inner peace. Tom's critical voice thought that if Tom were loved, he would have inner peace. Tom asked the question, "How does already

having Peace as a way of being radiate through the experience of being loved?" The part answered that with inner peace Tom could relax more and just enjoy being with his wife. You can also ask about not being loved. "How does already having Peace as a way of being transform situations when another person is not able to give the love that they have inside?" The part answered that being loved was less of a problem, since with inner peace it didn't matter as much. Tom then worked back through the other links in the chain, asking the same kinds of questions. Finally, he asked the part the question, "How does already having inner peace as a way of being in the world transform your need to be critical?" The part answered, "If I already have inner peace, I don't have to keep my eye on things as much."

The realization of a Core feeling state can be a profound experience. The person who is immersed in a feeling state like inner peace may be very quiet and seem like they are in another world, a world of mysterious bliss.

Growing up a part

The part of you that is causing a problem very likely emerged at a young age and is stuck at that age. In the Core Transformation Process, that part of yourself can actually grow up. For Tom's critical voice the Core state was inner peace. When you feel the Core state deeply, ask the part, "How old are you?" For Tom this was age six, when he was first going to school. Ask the part, "Would you like to have all the benefits that come from evolving forward in time to your current age with the Core state (inner peace) fully present?" If the part says no, it is probably a misunderstanding of some kind. The part may think that it has to stop having fun if it grows up, for example. Ask the part the reason and proceed to reassure and resolve the misunderstanding. When the part says it wants to be able to grow up, invite the part to have the Core state

(inner peace) fully present. When the Core state is powerfully present, invite the part to evolve forward in time to the person's current age with the Core state powerfully present during every moment of time. Have the part let you know when it has arrived at your current age.

Bringing the part fully into your body

Ask the part whether it is inside your body or outside. If it is outside your body, ask it to flow back into your body bringing the Core state (inner peace) with it. Suggest that the Core state (inner peace) is radiating through your whole body from the place that it entered, bringing the Core state (inner peace) to every cell of your body.

Reverse the outcome chain with the grown-up part

With the Core state (inner peace) powerfully in the now grown-up part and also spread throughout your body, work backward down the outcome chain, asking the part to notice how having the Core state (inner peace) as a way of being in the world transforms and enriches each link in the chain.

Transforming objecting parts

"Is there any part of me that objects to just having the Core state (of inner peace) as a way of being in the world?" Tom says that there is a part of him that doesn't want to lose control. If there is an objection like this, you go through the process with the objecting part, tracing the outcome chain, finding its Core state, and using the Core state to transform the outcome chain. From there you grow the part up, bring it fully into the body, and reverse the outcome chain again from the point of view of the Core state of the grown-up and fully embodied part. You then ask again, "Is

there any part of me that objects to just having the Core state (of inner peace) as a way of being in the world?" If there is, you go through the Core Transformation Process with the new part.

Timeline Generalization

When there are no parts left that object to your living with a Core state (inner peace) as a way of being, envision your timeline consisting of your past, your present, and your future and float back over it, looking down first on the time you were conceived. With your Core state (inner peace) powerfully present and radiating through yourself, move forward in time, letting your Core state saturate every moment of time up to the present. Then move on through the future, feeling the Core state unfold as time passes. Cycle back through the timeline several times, doing the Timeline Generalization faster and faster each time.

Parental Timeline Reimprinting

It is possible in our imagination to give our grandparents and parents our Core states and then to receive those Core states back from them. Since this is a somewhat complicated process that involves timelines for our four grandparents, our two parents, and ourselves, I am not going to say much about it, except that it is a way of amplifying Core states within and making them permanent and grounded.

The five states

The Core Transformation Process allows you to transform yourself so that you are living on a permanent basis with a deep inner feeling for each of these states, states that are really spiritual feelings:

Being:	**Feeling real, present, fully here**
Inner Peace:	**Having calmness and tranquility within, in all sorts of surroundings**
Love:	**Unconditional love that radiates to everyone and everything**
OKness:	**A deep sense of worthiness that arises from just being alive**
Oneness:	**An incredible sense of oneness with everything – a euphoria of absolute unity with all life**

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A CASE STUDY
by Connirae Andreas

Lynn had struggled with her weight for as long as she could remember. It had been a source of embarrassment for her as a teen-ager, and as an adult she found herself ashamed of the way she looked, too self-conscious to go out with friends or to spend any time in public where she was certain people would stare at the body she felt was betraying her. She felt depressed and hopeless about the years of effort (and money) she had put into numerous diets and exercise programs, only to find that very few had any effect. Any positive results she did experience lasted for only a short time, with the weight she had let go of quickly coming back with a vengeance.

With the assistance of a Core Transformation-trained counselor, Lynn found, to her surprise, that there was a positive intention behind the weight, an intention that the aspect of her that was "in charge" of hanging on to the weight was committed to.

"What do you want?" she quietly asked the part of her that generated the weight challenge, and then waited for a response from within. "The word that keeps coming to mind is 'protection,'" she spoke up a moment later, as the counselor slowly nodded her head. "Now," her Core Transformation guide suggested, "invite that part of you to step into what it's like to already have pro-

tection. … And when it's there, ask this part of you 'when you already have protection, what is it you want through having protection that's even more important, even deeper?'" As Lynn followed the suggestions, her posture began to shift as a new level of relaxation moved through her. "I hear the word 'safety'," she responded. "Oh, my god, is it possible that this part of me is trying to help me feel safe?"

As the process continued, Lynn discovered that the part of her was seeking relaxation through the safety, and through relaxation, it wanted to be able to reach out to others; by reaching out to others, this part wanted to feel accepted, and through feeling accepted, it was looking for love. From love, this important part of her wanted to find peace, and through peace, wholeness.

Lynn continued the Core Transformation Process, allowing the part of her to experience wholeness and to allow the wholeness to spread fully throughout her body.

She found, as a result, that her perspective shifted. By moving into the Core state (wholeness) she had been seeking all along, everything else began to change. Finally, she was able to bring the wholeness she had not thought possible into her whole life, filling the past, present, and even the future with this remarkable internal state that changed everything.

The part of Lynn that had been so committed to finding wholeness through protection, safety, relaxation, connection with others, acceptance, love, and peace had learned to simply step into that wholeness without all the interim steps it had struggled with for so long. A happy result (one of several for Lynn) was that weight began to come off with almost no effort. With no more need to hang on to it for protection and safety, her body was free to let go of what no longer belonged.

Learn More

If you want to learn these methods and get the benefit, you should read the Core Transformation book: Connirae Andreas and Tamara Andreas, *Core Transformation: Reaching the Wellspring Within* (Boulder, CO: Real People Press, 1994).

Go to the website for events and trainings:
https://andreasnlptrainings.com/core-transformation/.

There is also a seventy-five-minute introductory webinar by Tamara Andreas that includes a demonstration and a brief guided exercise everyone can participate in:
https://realpeople.leadpages.co/core-transformation-webinar/.

Chapter 17
Tapping Meditation and the Ladder of Love

What is Tapping Meditation?

Tapping meditation is a shortcut self-hypnosis method that I invented that allows easy access to the twilight state between waking and dreaming. Using the Ladder of Love, a list of word pairs that represent aspects of transcendence, you can produce low-key but powerful spiritual experiences in the twilight state.

Here is a *spontaneous* epiphany that happened to Thomas Merton, the famous Catholic mystic:

> In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness … This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud … I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself

> became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. (Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966], 156.)

Here is an *induced* epiphany that happened to me during tapping meditation:

> I woke up in the middle of the night around 2:30 a.m. and went downstairs to eat a couple of rice cakes and drink a glass of orange juice. When I went to bed again, I decided to practice sequential tapping meditation. I started out with relaxation pairs like "deeply peaceful, calm and comfortable, serene and tranquil, rested and relaxed," tapping alternately with one finger on one side of my body for each word. Progressing through the joyful pairs, "happy and hopeful, joyful and jubilant, elated and ecstatic, rapturous and radiant," I arrived at a love pair, "loving and luminous." By then I was in a half-awake, half-asleep trance and the words slowed down so that each one took a long time to say in my head. The subject/object differentiation began to break down, so that I felt that the words nearly filled my whole consciousness. Everything I thought of, images and ideas, became infused with love and glowed with a luminous light. I was filled with bliss and experienced a child-like wonder at the world. Love radiated out from me. After a few minutes of this I drifted off into a peaceful sleep.

Using tapping meditation, you can usually induce an epiphany on your own. Also, spontaneous epiphanies start to be more frequent.

There are three types of tapping:

1. **Prep tapping** is done at the beginning of a session to change brain wave and breathing patterns to make it easier to go into the twilight state between waking and dreaming.
2. **Slow tapping** facilitates access to the twilight state and a sense of fusion with the meaning of the tap words. It does this when you tap and mentally pronounce a word very, very slowly. Usually, it is done on a word pair like "boundless bliss." Tap with the left forefinger and say to yourself "boundless" very, very slowly. Tap with the right forefinger and say to yourself "bliss" very, very slowly.
3. **Sequential tapping** climbs from one word pair to the next in the sequence on the Ladder of Love, using three repetitions for each word pair. When three repetitions are done, you move on to the next word pair.

Prep tapping – five-minute preliminary procedure:

Prep tapping is done to change brain wave and breathing patterns toward those of sleep.

A. **Tapping:** Sit or lie in a relaxed position with your arms arranged so that your index fingers rest on the front of your body. Tap with one finger and then the other. Each time you tap you say a word from a word pair on the Ladder of Love list.

   For example, suppose your word pair is "serenity, tranquility."
   Tap with finger one and say in your mind: serenity.
   Tap with finger two and say in your mind: tranquility.
   Tap with finger one and say in your mind: serenity.
   Tap with finger two and say in your mind: tranquility.
   Etc.

B. **Alpha Rhythms:** At the same time that you say "serenity," roll your eyes up and look at your forehead. Psychological research shows that when you roll your eyes up it induces alpha rhythms in the brain. Alpha rhythms are associated with feelings of being mentally quiet, relaxed, and peaceful.

At the same time that you say "tranquility," look at some other part of your body – your heart, for example – and imagine a line running between the serenity forehead and the tranquility heart. Psychological research shows that imagining a line between two locations on your body induces alpha rhythms in the brain. Again, alpha rhythms are associated with feelings of being mentally quiet, relaxed, and peaceful.

C. **Deep Breathing:** At the same time as you are doing A and B above, empty your lungs and hold your breath until you begin to get uncomfortable. Then draw in a deep breath. Breathe normally while you do A and B until you don't feel out of breath anymore, until you feel comfortable with your breath again. Repeat the sequence of hold-and-release several times.

Deep breathing is an antidote to stress. When you are stressed, your breath becomes shallow. This procedure forces you to breathe deeply. Holding your breath changes the ratio of the oxygen and carbon dioxide in your blood so that it resembles that of a sleeping and dreaming person. Changing the ratio of your blood gases is probably the most important part of this preliminary procedure. There are many types of breathing exercises that could be used here – fast breathing; slow breathing; inhale deeply, hold, exhale deeply, hold; force all the air out of your lungs and then have a reflex inhale; etc. Do what works best for you.

D. **Immobilize Your Tongue:** Roll up your tongue until the back of it touches the roof of your mouth. When you speak, you move your tongue. When you talk to yourself in your head, there are still minute muscle movements in your tongue. Rolling up the tongue inhibits these movements, helping to block out the chatter going on in your head.

Slow tapping:

Sometimes when I did self-hypnosis before I invented tapping meditation, I noticed that the words I was saying to myself would become long and drawn out, so that they took several seconds to say. This lengthening of words was associated with a feeling of being in deep trance.

The whole purpose of tapping meditation is to be able to slow down the rate of the words you say to yourself by slowing your tapping. When you start tapping, words and thought and tapping flow at a normal rate. When you consciously slow your tapping and lengthen your words, you move into an altered state of consciousness, a state where the subject/object differentiation begins to break down and there is a sense of union with the object of your concentration.

When you switch to slow tapping, stop holding your breath and stop looking up and down at your forehead and your heart. Imagine the words being said about six inches in front of your eyes. Slow your tapping and make each word last several seconds. For example:

Normal: LIGHT
Slow Tap: LLLLLLLLLLLLIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIGHT

After a while of doing this, dream images or dream sentences will begin to drift through your head. Recognize them as dreams and try to saturate them with the transcendence you are feeling from the

tapping meditation. One goal of tapping meditation is to transform your dreaming self so that it is filled with the light of love, rather than being lost in everyday fears, angers, and desires.

When you are asleep and dreaming, muscle movement is inhibited so that you don't actually move physically as you do actions in your dream reality. As you get deeper into the twilight state, tapping can slow to nothing because muscle movement is inhibited during the dream state. You can't move at all. The words keep sounding, however, and you are still conscious in that altered state.

Why I Invented Tapping Meditation

I was having trouble forcing myself to go to bed at night. I would stay up and watch action-adventure films on Netflix. One night I was watching *Point of No Return*, a film in which a violent young woman is trained as an assassin, falls in love while she is on a mission, and wants to leave the life of killing but is forced to continue by her handlers. The next morning, I was three-quarters asleep, dreaming of gun fights and hot pursuit, one of my usual action-adventure dreams. I woke up enough to realize that I was dreaming and decided to flood the dream with the light of love. The feelings swelled into an experience of bliss-love. I lay there, body at peace, still mostly asleep. It felt like I received a teaching: Paul, while he was persecuting the early church, was on his way to Damascus. He was engulfed in light and was asked, "Why do you persecute me?" It wasn't as a rebuke, but a way for him to confront his own violence. The choice was his. He could commit himself to a life of love or continue to persecute those he feared and hated. This is the choice for everyone. You can cultivate love or you can continue to live in fear, anger, and the excitement of violence. My entertainment was violence, my dreams were violence, but I could transform myself into someone who shone with the bliss and light of unconditional love. The choice was mine.

My problem, of course, was what to actually do to cultivate love in myself. Because I was researching altered states of consciousness, deep trance, and mysticism at that time, I created tapping meditation and the Ladder of Love to help me cleave to the transcendent parts of my own human nature.

The Ladder of Love

Peace Words

Safe and secure
Calm and content
Easy and effortless
Silent and still
Serene and tranquil
Rested and relaxed
Perfect peace

Joy Words

Happy and hopeful
Lighthearted and laughing
Joyous and jubilant
Elated and euphoric
Exultant and ecstatic
Rapturous and radiant
Boundless bliss

Love Words

Accept and approve
Appreciate and admire
Respect and love
Beloved and loving
Caring and sharing
Empathy and compassion
Luminous and loving
Ocean of love

Wave of bliss
Divine love

Light Words

Radiant glory
Shining splendor
Unlimited light
Shining like the Sun

Beauty Words

Marvelous mystery
Subtle and sublime
Boundless beauty

Mystical Words

Holy love
Holy light
Sacred love
Sacred light
Miracle and wonder
Awesome mystery
Grace and gratitude
Purity and perfection
Timeless eternity
Infinite depth
Ineffable truth
Living whole
Unity and oneness
Pure consciousness
Radiant void

Who is Dan Washburn?

I'm a graduate of Harvard University and have an MA in psychology from Brandeis University. At Brandeis I was a teaching assistant to the famous psychologist Abraham Maslow. After getting my degrees I completed a two-year internship in group psychotherapy

and psychodrama at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. I did not go on in psychology, however. I went forward with data analysis, statistics, and computers. I worked my way up to be a manager of satellite traffic at COMSAT, the Communications Satellite Corporation. From there I worked for eighteen years as a senior systems analyst at the FBI. I retired in 2013 and have been pursuing my interests in the intersection of psychology and spirituality.

I was religious as a child. I was raised Catholic. A statue of the Virgin Mary in her blue robes sat on my dresser and there was a crucifix over my bed. Both were items that I had asked for – they weren't forced on me. I well remember the excitement of my first communion at the Basilica of Saint Mary in downtown Minneapolis. Later I went to an Episcopalian high school where we wore suits and ties and went to chapel every day. Neither the Catholic nor the Episcopal versions of Christianity survived my teens. I couldn't get beyond the paradox of the God who said he loved me but also said he would torture me if I didn't do what he wanted. However, I retained enough interest in Christianity to take a course on the New Testament at Harvard given by the famous Biblical scholar Krister Stendahl. This course introduced me to a whole new, more scholarly way of thinking about the teachings of the New Testament.

In my late twenties I went through a long-term, exhausting illness. I had horrible headaches for months on end. Doctors were unable to give me a precise diagnosis or come up with an effective treatment. To keep from going insane I started to study the New Testament with the idea that there might be something hidden there that I had missed that would give meaning to my pain. One of the things that struck me was that Jesus not only healed people, he also forgave their sins. I came to believe that he did this so that people could be open to a real relationship with the loving God. It is very hard to be open to someone you feel is judging you all the time. Another thing that struck me was the advice about prayer. "Therefore I tell

you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (Mark 11:24 NIV). "But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind" (James 1:6 NIV). Jesus taught that for prayers to be answered you must be in a state of belief. To me this meant that you had to have your sins forgiven so that you felt like you deserved to receive the blessing and you had to overcome doubts so you trusted in your relationship with God and believed that he loved you so much that he would give you what you needed. Casting about for a way to use these insights, I decided to try autosuggestion. I acquired a rosary and every bead I told on the ring stood for a word in the phrase, "I deserve healing, I deserve happiness, I deserve love." "Deserve" represented forgiveness; "healing, happiness, and love" represented what I wanted; and the telling of the beads was the autosuggestive process that went beyond the doubts of the conscious mind into the pure belief created by unthinking, unquestioning repetition. Whether this influenced the course of my illness, I can't say. I do know that it made me feel a lot better psychologically. When you suffer, there is a part of you that says, "I must be suffering for a reason, I must be guilty of something." Forgiveness is a necessary antidote to suffering. When you feel forgiven, you can have hope that the suffering will end. After I recovered, I found that I had acquired a permanent interest. Research on early Jewish and Christian mysticism has been my off-hours preoccupation for many years. I have spent a great deal of time on the problem of the historical Jesus, trying to figure out who he was, what he truly taught, and the source of his spiritual power.

I've been interested in hypnosis since my teens when my best friend and I read books and experimented on each other. He was a very good subject and I was able to produce negative hallucinations with him. A negative hallucination is when you can't see something that is actually there. Later I learned a little hypnosis in graduate school

at Brandeis, but only used it to demonstrate some phenomena to friends. I was really struck by its power. I could make one friend who was a good subject forget his name after ten minutes of talk. Another told me that the regression I did with her made her feel the happiest she had been in years.

After reading Hornell Hart's book *Autoconditioning: The New Way to a Successful Life* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1956), a record of his work on measuring happiness and bringing people up from despair via self-hypnosis, I began to wonder if there were ways to use hypnosis to bring people up into ecstasy and to make it their permanent state. Hence, I began to experiment with self-hypnosis to see if I couldn't make myself happy. I would give myself long induction talks focusing on relaxation and, when I felt I was in an altered state, I would give myself direct commands to be happy, like, "Happiness is bubbling up inside you," and "You will feel wonderful for the rest of the week." To my surprise, this worked! For two or three days afterward I could feel happiness flowing inside me. Unfortunately, life events swept all of this away. But now, years later, I have had the time to think about, research, and experiment with ecstasy and hypnotic trance.

Some of my spontaneous spiritual experiences before the invention of Tapping Meditation

In the next section after this I detail some of my experiences with tapping meditation. Since I'm not the average person, as a baseline I give here some of my spiritual experiences prior to the invention of tapping meditation. Note that these are all spontaneous experiences while tapping meditation produces induced experiences.

While waiting for my wife, who was undergoing minor surgery, I fell into an altered state: my mind was awake, but my body was asleep and drenched in deep feelings of peace. A similar state occurred sev-

eral times while I was waking up in the morning. My mind would be awake, but my body would still be immobilized, filled with a deeply enjoyable peace. I do not normally wake up with this sense of peace, even when I am conscious but my body is still mostly asleep. At times I could induce this altered state while I was falling asleep at night by practicing the Shi'ur Qomah meditation and remembering the feelings of peace. (Shi'ur Qomah, Measurement of the Body, is a meditation practice that was part of early Jewish mysticism. It involves imagining lines on the enthroned body of God.)

I was in my car driving to see a friend. During the ride I had a powerful feeling of the rightness of the universe and a sense of oneness with it. This came on me suddenly and lasted for about ten minutes.

While waking from a dream, I had an intense feeling of the depth and beauty of the characters in a TV show I had been watching the night before. This feeling slowly expanded to include the entire world. Everything and everybody was miraculous.

While walking through my bedroom, I had an inner image of the yin-yang symbol. I was outside of it, looking at the whole created field of opposites, filled with bliss. This lasted for about half a minute. What was different from just looking at a picture of the yin-yang symbol was the sense of the bliss of creation.

It was a bad week. I had an awful cold and our dog had begun to throw up blood, plus I had to go to Stuttgart, Germany. Half dozing on the plane I decided to meditate by alternatively thinking of the Divine Names YAHWEH, He Is, and EHYEH, I Am, names used in the Shi'ur Qomah heart and forehead meditations. After a while of saying "I Am, He Is, I Am, He Is," the thought came to me that this was like the Hindu Sat, Chit, Ananda – Being, Consciousness, Bliss. I had the Being (He Is) and the Consciousness (I Am), but where was the Bliss? I began to see images of deep valleys, forested moun-

tains, and beautiful sunsets, all alive with the light of God, the bliss of creation. Delight danced in me. When God creates, it is an act of joy, like composing a great symphony or writing a sublime poem. But with God it is a supreme ecstasy. The Bliss/Light of creation is in everything, but especially every human being. I recognized that "He Is" that, and that "I Am" that, too. Wonderful joy was with me for about twenty minutes and then it faded into the background. My awful week continued. During the layover at London's Heathrow Airport, I lost my passport and had to spend two days in Britain getting a temporary replacement from the US Embassy. It didn't bum me out too much, though, since I could still feel hints of the light of bliss shining in everything.

I was dreaming about starting a spiritual study group but was feeling lonely and depressed because I didn't think many people would come to experience what I had to offer. I was wandering the halls of a school looking for a place to hold the group and then I was filling out a form to obtain a room. It changed into a form to sponsor an orphan. The form became three-dimensional with an image of Padre Pio, the Catholic miracle-working saint, making joking leaps inside it. The image of a female saint with an invisible face came near to where I was working on the form. I realized that these saints lived nearby and that I could go to see them. I experienced enormous joy and enormous pain with the realization that they were close and my intense loneliness could end. For the first time in my life someone could truly know me. Interpretation: The focus shifts from teaching spirituality to actually helping an orphan. Then Padre Pio jumps for joy and the egoless female saint draws near. Access to the saints is through helping others. Loneliness ends when the false self is dissolved in the joy of loving. I should shift my efforts from researching and teaching to working more with real people to help them.

I was dreaming that I was studying with a tai chi master. He taught me to breathe into areas of my body that were tight – to expand

them with my in-breath and then to let them go on the out-breath. It seemed like a magical secret to me in the dream. I could unify my body and my breath and move with all the subtlety and power of the wind. I was mad to learn more secrets. My wife delivered a note and we made a date to get together at 1 o'clock. In search of secrets I visited a doctor with research interests in Chinese energy medicine. We talked for a long time until he had to leave. I picked up a bibliography that he was working on from his desk and read it with great fascination. I suddenly realized with horror that it was way past 1 p.m. and that I had completely forgotten to meet my wife. Interpretation: The dream represents three areas of my life – actual spiritual practice, my research work, and my family life. It is a warning to me to keep spiritual development, understanding, and emotional life balanced and integrated.

My wife and I were out to dinner. She hadn't brought her contact lens case and I walked to the drug store to buy one while she waited at the bar in the restaurant. On the way everything became super-involving and wondrously beautiful. I treasured all the people and even all the buildings around me.

Some of my induced spiritual experiences after the invention of Tapping Meditation

I woke up around 4 a.m. When I went back to bed, I decided to do sequential tapping meditation. Up around "boundless bliss" on the Ladder of Love I fell into a deeper trance. The words were slower, filled my consciousness, and had a more sensuous reality. As I rose even higher on the ladder, I had a sense of boundless space, like the depth of the blue sky. It had a feeling of enlightenment about it, as if this were the all-encompassing empty space of consciousness.

I half woke up from a dream of dead bodies and narrow escapes. I started to do tapping meditation on "peace, joy, love, light" with

the intention of bringing these qualities into the dream characters. I began to dream of people with beautiful flashing lights around their heads like dancing stars. I was amazed at the transformation in the dream and was full of hope that I was beginning to see the inner splendor in people. I lay in bed for a long time full of happiness. I loved my body because of the joy I felt in it. I drifted into a dream in which I was speaking in tongues. Later thoughts: I have seen the beautiful flashing light around people in my dreams. It is around people in real life, too, even the selfish and uncaring. I am beginning to think of those people I despise because of all the pain they cause as just being out of touch with the light of God within them. The solution is not to obliterate them but to find some way to help them experience the numinous beauty of their own reality. Meanwhile I can love them for who they are inside.

One of the great things about Saturday morning is that I can sleep late. I woke up around 8:30 and really didn't have to get up until 9, so I decided to do tapping meditation while I was still in bed and half asleep. I focused on getting into deep trance using slow tapping on "boundless beauty, limitless light" as my fixation words. I wanted to experiment to see if using "boundless beauty" would kick off feelings of ecstasy. With each tap I imagined the word traveling up a line connecting my tapping finger and the center of my forehead. After a while of doing these things while tapping at a normal rate, I began slowing the tapping and lengthening the words. Pretty soon I could feel the trance beginning. The words became automatically slower and longer, with a sensuous focus on each syllable. They felt as if they filled my whole consciousness. I stopped holding my breath, I stopped imagining the connecting line, I just experienced the words. On the word "beauty," beauty seemed to radiate out through the whole universe. I could feel the beauty and the bliss.

I was in South Dakota for a Mount Rushmore vacation with family. I woke up at 4 in the morning and decided to do tapping medi-

tation before going back to sleep. I did slow tapping for a while on "calm, content," "serenity, tranquility," with the word over the head on the first tap and under the feet at the second. Then I switched to tapping on "boundless beauty, awesome mystery." After that it was "timeless time, infinite space." Gradually the words filled my consciousness. I intuitively switched to "infinite space, boundless beauty." A dream sentence came into my mind and then dream images began to appear. I absorbed them into the words by seeing them as being created by infinite space and boundless beauty. The tapping kept me from falling asleep. Gradually tapping slowed to nothing. I didn't want to move at all. The words kept sounding, however, and I was absorbed into them and experienced some of the vastness of infinite space and some of the delight of boundless beauty. After a few minutes I stirred back to waking consciousness again and then fell asleep. That morning when I woke up, I felt wonderfully blessed.

I woke up around 4 a.m. and decided to do tapping meditation. I did prep tapping on "light of love, limitless light." Then I switched to slow tapping on "loving light, limitless light." I didn't seem to be moving into trance very well, so I held my breath during slow tapping. That seemed to do it and I drifted into the twilight state.

I stayed up late looking at the movie *Amadeus*. I decided to do a form of sequential tapping. I like sequential tapping, but it doesn't slow down into the fusion state very easily, so I added the word pairs "slowing, slowing, slowing, down" to it. Here is the sequence I used. There is a tap on each word, switching back and forth between the right and the left index fingers:

Holy, holy, holy, love
Holy, holy, holy, light
Holy, love, holy, light
Holy, bliss, holy, beauty

Slowing, slowing, slowing, down
Slowing, slowing, slowing, down
Holy, holy, holy, love.
Holy, holy, holy, light.
Slowing, slowing, slowing, down
Slowing, slowing, slowing, down
Etc.

I achieved a fairly abstracted trance state using this sequence. However, I soon returned to normal consciousness and then fell asleep. When I woke up the next morning my head was filled with all the music I had heard during the movie. Salieri calls great music the voice of God. He rebels against God, not Mozart, because he has not been given the talent to articulate the voice, only to hear it from others. The music went on for hours in my head, a form of ecstasy that brought me close to the divine. For the first time I felt like I was into the hot zone, the far end of the spiritual thermometer, where words slip away and all that is left is the beauty and the bliss of the music. I began to understand what Brad and Hillary Keeney are talking about. (See their book *Sacred Ecstatics: The Recipe for Setting Your Soul on Fire*. [The Keeneys, 2019].)

I woke up at 4 in the morning and decided to do tapping meditation before I went back to sleep. I chose to focus on "rapture and radiance" and did prep tapping for ten minutes by rolling up my tongue and holding my breath. Each tap-word traveled a line between the tapping finger and my forehead. Then I did slow tapping on "rapture and radiance." In the beginning the words felt like they were far away. After a while they were close in front of me and I began to feel some of the reality behind them. My body became very still so that I gradually lost the ability to tap. The words still sounded in my head, on auto repeat. Some dream wisps appeared, for instance, the image of a fist. I engulfed them with rapture and radiance. I remembered that the mystic Evelyn Under-

hill said that the difference between trance and mysticism is the focus on a deeply religious subject. The words "Jesus and Mary" came to my mind. Very surprised that Mary would come to me. The words "Jesus and Mary" repeated themselves over and over in my head. I was too relaxed to be able to tap. I have not been that devotional to Jesus and Mary since I was six years old.

I woke up at 4 in the morning and did prep tapping for ten minutes with "deeply relaxed, subtle and sublime." During slow tapping I began to experience the reality of "subtle and sublime." After a while I switched to "grace and beauty." Deep relaxation of the body set in. I felt removed from my body, though I could still feel it. Dreams drifted around me and with an effort I identified them as dreams instead of being absorbed into them. After a time, I rested in empty space. This went on for some time. I decided to experiment with love. Did slow tapping on my own name and my wife's name. The sweet beauty of love filled my heart.

I woke up in the middle of the night. Did prep tapping on "ocean of love, boundless bliss" while holding my breath. I looked at my forehead with "ocean of love" and my feet with "boundless bliss." After holding my breath, while breathing, I looked at my forehead and said "deep" and then my feet and said "relaxation." If any place in my body didn't feel relaxed, I looked at that place instead of my feet. After a few minutes I switched to slow tapping on "love, bliss." After a time my body began to fade and "love, bliss" became more and more real. Dreams drifted through my head and I tried to engulf them with love and bliss. I experimented with a three-set tapping command: "ocean of love, fuses together, with everyday life." I woke up in the morning and could feel my identity with the ocean of love in the background. These days I pretty much just think about the ocean of love and I can begin to feel it to some extent.

Experimenting on Your Own

Tapping meditation isn't meant to confine you to a set protocol for producing spiritual epiphanies. There are all sorts of things you can do with it.

Hypnotic Suggestions

For example, you can use the twilight state to give yourself self-hypnosis suggestions. First of all, you can set up a trigger event to put yourself quickly into the trance state. "Every time I tap I will immediately go into a deep trance." Then you can make up word pairs or rhymes to help improve things about yourself. When autosuggestion was first invented, the classic phrase was, "Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better." Read a book or two on self-hypnosis to get a feel for what problems you can work on and how to phrase suggestions.

Practice of the Presence

There are other spiritual things you can do: In the 1600s, Brother Lawrence was part of the kitchen help at the Carmelite Monastery of Paris. In spite of his lowly station, many came to him for spiritual counseling because of the profound peace that he radiated. After he died his words were collected into a book called *The Practice of the Presence of God*, which has become a spiritual classic. He taught that you should always strive to be aware of the presence of God and how much he loves you, no matter what you are doing.

When you are in the twilight state, you can do a variation on the practice of the presence. Let the voice of God

come to you from a space about a foot in front of your face. God says: "I love you. I accept you. I respect you. I appreciate you. You are my beloved child. I draw you into my embrace."

Triple Love

Say "love" and send love to infinity on the out-breath.
Move your attention to the heart and say "God" on the in-breath.
Say "love" and send love to infinity on the out-breath.
Move your attention to the heart and say "everyone" on the in-breath.
Say "love" and send love to infinity on the out-breath.
Move your attention to the heart and say "self" on the in-breath.

Upgrading Dreams

When you are in the twilight state, give instructions to your dreaming self to dream of holy things. You can also tell yourself to wake up in your dreams, so that instead of regular dreams you have lucid dreams. You can tap on phrases like "dream of bliss, dream of love" in order to give yourself dreams with spiritual content.

When you tap and say a word, let an image emerge in your mind. Identify the image with a word. If no image emerges, just say what you see, e.g., swirly eyelid lights. It doesn't matter if the image has any relation to the word you first said. You are trying to merge dream consciousness and waking consciousness.

In the twilight state imagine yourself flying over a landscape. Trees and houses and people are passing

below you. This kind of imagery frequently appears on its own during the hypnagogic state between waking and sleeping.

Saturating your Body

While you are tapping, move the words through your body, focusing on each body part and relaxing it as the word emerges from it.

Receiving Love

See the divine glory in front of you. Tap as usual and see each word appear in the midst of the glory. Each word then leaves the glory, travels to you, and comes into your body, bringing the feeling with it.

Adding Emotion

Sometimes during slow tapping you can be identified with the words, but they remain words, they don't cross over into emotions very easily. You can add emotion by adding imagery:

As I slow tapped on "light," I imagined the light of immense splendor permeating everything; on "heat," I imagined the heat of the fire that illuminates and strengthens; on "love," I imagined being caressed and touched; on "bliss," I imagined the ecstasy of sexual merging. After a few minutes, tapping slowed even more and the words took on an extra reality, so that I felt I was living their content. After a time, I was too relaxed to tap and the words also faded away. I was simply immersed in a void of beauty.

The Scientific Basis for Tapping Meditation

Upward eye-rolls produce alpha rhythms in the brain:

See Fred H. Previc, "The Role of the Extrapersonal Brain Systems in Religious Activity," *Consciousness and Cognition* 15, no. 3 (September 2006).

Relevant bibliographic references in Previc's article:

R. W. Hood, "Hypnotic Susceptibility and Reported Religious Experience," *Psychological Reports* 33, no. 2 (1973): 549–50.

Eric Leskowitz, "The ''Third Eye'': A Psychoendocrine Model of Hypnotizability," *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* 30, no. 3 (1988): 209–15.

Marjorie Schuman, "The Psychophysiological Model of Meditation and Altered States of Consciousness: A Critical Review," in *The Psychobiology of Consciousness*, ed. Julian M. Davidson and Richard J. Davidson (New York: Plenum. 1980), 333–78.

Jeffrey L. Saver and John Rabin, "The Neural Substrates of Religious Experience," *Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 9, no. 3 (1997): 498–510.

Andris K. Tebëcis, "Eye Movements During Transcendental Meditation," *Folia Psychiatrica et Neurologica* 30, no. 4 (1976): 487–93.

Andris K. Tebëcis and K. A. Provins, "Hypnosis and Eye Movements," *Biological Psychology* 3, no. 1 (1975): 31–47.

Imagining lines on the body produces alpha rhythms in the brain:

Les Fehmi and Jim Robbins, *The Open-Focus Brain: Harnessing the Power of Attention to Heal Mind and Body* (Boston: Trumpeter Books, 2007).

John Selby, "Beyond Kundalini Awakening," in *Kundalini Rising: Exploring the Energy of Awakening*, Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, Andrew Newberg, Sivananda Radha, Ken Wilber, and John Selby (Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2009).

Work with the Open-Focus exercises has the reputation of producing powerful spiritual experiences for some people:

> Dear Dr. Fehmi: How can I relate what happened? After working with you for some time … suddenly my whole being was flooded with love. It was so powerful that I had to lie down in the woods behind your office looking up into the sky through the trees for a long, long time—just filled with total unconditional love—loving the whole universe and everyone and everything in it. A cosmic orgasm. A major peak experience. Did this happen because all my brain waves were in sync? You will have to explain it scientifically. This was a big unforgettable experience that I am very grateful to you for. Sincerely, Louisa (*The Open-Focus Brain*, p. 96)

Changes in blood gas ratios:

This is not an area of expertise for me. I need to do much more research on the physiology of breathing and its impact on blood gases. Here are a couple of observations that I have gleaned, however.

In Stanislav Grof's technique of Holotropic Breathwork prolonged rapid breathing is combined with listening to awe inspiring music. "On occasion … faster breathing leads to progressive relaxation, dissolution of boundaries, and experience with Oneness with other people, with the universe, and with God. The breather progressively enters a mystical state without having to face any emotionally or physically challenging material. This can be associated with visions of white or golden light." (Stanislav Grof and Christina Grof, *Holotropic Breathwork: A New Approach to Self-Exploration and Therapy* [Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010], 68.)

Ladislas Meduna administered carbogen (usually 30 percent carbon dioxide and 70 percent oxygen) to his patients to help induce therapeutic abreaction. One subject reported: "After the second breath came an onrush of color, first a predominant sheet of beautiful rosy-red, following which came successive sheets of brilliant color and design, some geometric, some fanciful and graceful …. Then the colors separated; my soul drawing apart from the physical being, was drawn upward seemingly to leave the earth and to go upward where it reached a greater Spirit with Whom there was a communion, producing a remarkable, new relaxation and deep security." (Ladislas J. Meduna, *Carbon Dioxide Therapy: A Neurophysiological Treatment of Nervous Disorders* [Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publishing, 1950]. Quote is taken from the Wikipedia entry on carbogen.)

Chapter 18
Five Minutes to Spiritual Bliss

This is a method that can very quickly bring a person into spiritual bliss. What do I mean by spiritual bliss? It is a state of ecstasy where the mind is suspended in love without words and where it is impossible to stop smiling. And, yes, it only takes about five minutes to get there when you know the technique.

You can think of spiritual bliss either as communion with a transcendent reality or as communion with your own higher self, the part of you that feels peace, love, joy, reverence, and awe. It's your choice. Either way works. This article is written as if God is real. If you don't believe that, please think that during the exercise you are communicating with your own higher self, the part of you that is full of wonder and love and that can experience peak and mystical states.

I started out thinking about how to do what Jesus said is the most important thing to do. He said the first thing is to love God with all your heart. The second is to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:34–40).

But how do you go about doing this? How do you love God and all the other people in the world, too? How do you love on command?

Feelings are feelings – they come spontaneously in response to realities. You can't just order yourself to love someone.

The secret to working with love is in the fact that emotions are expressed through movements of the human body, particularly the facial muscles. Psychological research has identified seven facial expressions which correspond to universal emotions: disgust, anger, fear, sadness, happiness, surprise, and contempt. Only one of these is a positive emotion: happiness, which is indicated by a smile. All the positive emotions are indicated by a smile. Love is indicated by a smile. I know this personally because when I kiss my wife, she gets the most beautiful, loving smile on her face.

So, when you feel an emotion, it becomes visible on your face. It is also true that when you take on a facial expression you feel the emotion. When you consciously smile, you feel a little shot of happiness. When you want to love God and everyone else, too, you should think of them and consciously smile. I have crafted this basic insight into a technique for reaching spiritual bliss.

Over the course of a few minutes time you can bring yourself to a state where you are constantly smiling. When you combine this with a sense of communion with God as your loving friend, it results in spiritual ecstasy. Gradually your urge to speak fades and you exist wordlessly in the ocean of love.

First, choose a pet name for God or your higher self. When you talk to someone you love and adore you use pet names. When I practice five minutes to spiritual bliss, I frequently use "G." "G" of course stands for God. "God" is a huge, imposing edifice of a concept, while "G" is much more intimate. It doesn't have all the associa-

tions that "God" does. Do not choose a pet name that emphasizes power. Names like King of Kings are inappropriate. You want the love of an intimate friend, not someone high in the hierarchy who looks down on you. Add endearments such as dear, darling, honey, sweetness, etc. This is someone you absolutely love and adore. I frequently say "dear, darling G."

Some possible pet names: BFF (best friend forever), bestie, my buddy, pal, dear, sweetie, darling, honey, sugar.

Spiritual Bliss – There are five stages to the technique.

1. **Rocking and Smiling:** Sit in a chair, on the edge of the seat, with your feet on the ground, hands in your lap. Rock your head and the upper part of your body forward and then back again. As you rock forward, smile. As you rock back, stop smiling.

2. **Exchanging Love with Verbal Endearments:** As you rock forward and smile, say to yourself things like: "I love you, dear wonderful, beautiful G." Occasionally vary the wording. "I adore you." "I'm crazy about you." "I'm mad about you." "I admire you so much." "I appreciate all the beauty you create." "You're fantastic." "You're awesome." "You're wonderful." As you rock back continue smiling and take the part of God (or your higher self). Substitute your own name as you say things like, "I love you, Dan." "I appreciate you, Dan." "You are terrific, Dan." "I adore you, Dan." "I think you are wonderful, Dan." "I admire you, Dan." "I encourage you, Dan." "I love you just the way you are, Dan." "I forgive you, Dan," "Thank you for being you, Dan." "Thank you for spending time with me, Dan." You are now smiling all the time while you are rocking back and forth and sending

endearments and receiving them. Let your sense of love catch fire and your smile broaden into an ecstatic beam.

3. **Sending and Receiving Love with Words:** Rocking forward, feel the love and send it, saying to yourself, "I send love." Rocking back, feel the love coming to you, and say, "I receive love."

4. **Sending and Receiving Love without Words:** Rocking forward, feel the love and send it, without saying anything to yourself. Rocking back, feel the love coming to you, without saying anything to yourself.

5. **Spiritual Bliss:** Gradually slow the rocking and then stop, feeling the two loves merging together. You are now in a state of ecstasy where the mind is suspended in love without words and where it is impossible to stop smiling.

Comment: A few minutes have brought you to a transport of smiling bliss where you feel bathed in love. It can be a very powerful experience. And so easy to do! Mix and stir these instructions and season according to your own taste, knowing that your goal is to smile while exchanging love to the point that you are in a state of spiritual bliss.

God is becoming an intimate friend, someone I love very much. I always felt distant and conflicted before. When I was a little kid, I was appalled at the idea that God could see everything I did. He was everywhere, constantly spying on me, judging me. How could I love and trust someone who was always looking at me to see if I was doing something wrong? Now I am basking in unconditional love. I know he still loves me, no matter what I have done. It's a lot easier to live from love when I actually feel beloved. Now I can look at other people and know that the heart of love beats in them, too. They

are not just enemies ready to judge me when I miss a step. They are really honeycombs of kindness.

Now, once in a while during the day, I will suddenly feel a loving presence and a quick hug. I will get a bliss-filled smile on my face. Is it reality? Is it imagination? Who cares? It feels so loving!

Imagination leads to reality in this case. It is very difficult to say where one leaves off and the other begins. When you pray, is God really on the other end of the line or are you only imagining it? But you believe he is there and sometimes you feel his presence.

In some ways this is a false question. The social psychologist Jonathan Haidt tells us that his study of the moral emotions has led him to conclude that the human mind can perceive divinity and sacredness, whether or not God exists. He says that after this realization he lost the smug contempt he felt for religion in his twenties. So, whether you are tapping a true spiritual reality or an innate capacity of the human mind, you can still drink your fill from the holy well of awesome, sacred beauty. (See Jonathan Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom* [New York: Basic Books, 2006], 183–84.)

When I prayed before, it was a duty. I had to force myself to pray. Now I am mad to get into the bliss state again and to exchange love with my infinitely beautiful friend.

Although it doesn't look like it, spiritual bliss is a trance technique. The conscious mind is rational, logical, and analytic. The unconscious mind is emotional. It has feelings, thinks in pictures and stories, and stores memories. When you smile and repeat a sentence, you are communicating with the feeling mind. You are slipping an idea along with an emotion into the unconscious where it stores it for action. Because of the feeling and the repetition, you have

bypassed the critical faculty of the conscious mind and suggestions are accepted and carried out.

Merging – taking on God consciousness.

You are now experiencing something of the bliss that is involved in loving and being loved by God. The goal of such mystical experience is to become one with God. Here is a way to deepen union while you are in the bliss state:

Take the role of God. While in spiritual bliss be the one thing that contains everything. Say these phrases: "I am everything. I am every blade of grass in the world. I am every star in the sky. I am every drop of water in every ocean. I am every leaf on every tree. I am every person in the world. I am all things. I am the living heart of the universe."

Becoming the Body of God – give your body experience in expressing God.

Let God act through you. You are feeling a sacred emotion, the bliss of love. Do things with your body that express that emotion. Let your arms and your body move as they will to the feeling. Step out of the way and let them move on their own. To kick-start this, you can imagine yourself as a marionette or a puppet, but go beyond to just letting your body move to the feeling.

You might express love through music. Beat a spontaneous rhythm to the emotion of love. Or intone, or hum, or sing to that joy. Get out of the way and let God act through you. Let one way of acting spark another. For example, intone and after that dance and after that beat a rhythm, all within the sacred bliss emotion. Become the body of God. (For more on musical expression of sacred emotion see Brad and Hillary Keeney, *The Spiritual Engineering of Sacred Ecstasy*, 2018.)

God and the Five Languages of Love

There are five ways of expressing love. Here is how they might be woven into your love relationship with God:

Words of endearment

We have already seen this in the spiritual bliss technique.

God's role – During the exchange of love God tells you words of endearment, "I appreciate you," "I love you," "I'm so proud of you."

Your role – During the exchange of love you tell God words of endearment, "I love you," "I'm crazy about you," "I adore you."

Gifts

God's role – God sends wonderful, beautiful things your way.

Your role – To be open to the wondrous beauty of the world. To revel in reality. Also, to send something back: A gift to charity. A favor for a friend. An act of kindness. A creation of your own that adds beauty to the world.

Acts of Service

God's role – God sends some kind person to do something for you that makes your life easier or more pleasurable.

Your role – You do something for someone else. Volunteer at a hospital. Read books for the blind. Serve supper at a food kitchen.

Quality time

God's role – Pulls on your heart, letting you know that he wants to spend time with you.

Your role – Finding the time during your busy day for a date with your own dear, darling friend.

Physical touch

God's role – Holding you and rocking you. Looking into your eyes.

Your role – Feeling the beauty of hugging and holding.

Avoiding Dangers

There are a number of dangers in practicing spiritual bliss. Here are some things to guard against:

I'm Special

Sometimes spiritual experience can go to your head. You start thinking, "I'm a saint, I'm a true angel of the Lord. All these others will be cast into the lake of fire, but I will be taken up into heaven when the rapture comes and the Lord appears on the clouds of heaven," or some other egocentric aggrandizement. Samuel Bowers had a mystical experience of divine bliss, unmerited grace, and ecstatic realization. What he gathered from this was that he had been appointed by God to a special mission to defend Mississippi from the invasion of communist civil rights workers from the North. He founded an organization called the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and became its first Imperial Wizard. He was later convicted of the 1964 abduction and murder of three civil rights workers: James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. (See Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights*, [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997], 54.)

It's All True!

I had a colleague at work who told me that he had started to have visions of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. They would come to him in his bedroom at night, looking completely

real, and give him instructions for his life. "It's all true!" he would tell me. "Everything in the Bible is true!"

This in spite of the fact that there are three hundred major faith traditions in Christianity and thousands of denominations around the world, everything from Roman Catholic to African Oneness Pentecostal. (See the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., edited by David B. Barrett, George Thomas Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001].) Spiritual experience can short-circuit the brain. Because it is emotional and sometimes ineffable, it is easy to intuit truths rather than to critically think through the implications. Plus the emphasis on faith makes believing in the unbelievable a virtue, which is how we got to three hundred faith traditions in Christianity. My advice is to take everything with a grain of salt, even if Jesus seems to appear to you in the flesh. Do not abandon your free will and your own good judgment.

God Tells Me

I knew a couple who were deep into Catholic Pentecostalism. They were both devoted, the wife especially. She had a close relationship with God and from time to time she would receive messages from him. Unfortunately, he was telling her that her husband was cheating on her. This, of course, caused many agonies for her husband. How in the world do you tell your beloved that God is lying to her and have her believe it? If God begins communicating with you, believe him if he talks about love, healing, happiness, beauty, peace, forgiveness, comfort, relief from pain, and rescue from danger. Put it down to your own wishes and fears if he talks about things like riches, outrage, and revenge.

Acting from Faith, Not Love

The experience of divine love comes and goes. In the meantime, we try to do what is right. But doing what is right is actually doing what is wrong. Jesus wanted us to act from our feelings of love, not from our understanding of the rules. So, when you make a judgment or do a duty, test it against your feelings of love. If it doesn't stem from love, consider changing what you are doing.

Gifts of the Spirit

In Christianity there are several spiritual gifts that can come to someone who is immersed in divine love and is visited by the Holy Spirit. Examples are healing, performing miracles, prophesying, discerning whether a spiritual influence comes from a good or evil source, speaking in tongues, and interpreting speech in tongues. All of these things can distract the mind from the true goal, however, which is to cultivate love. You can have a mystical experience or a spiritual gift, but ultimately progress depends on what you do with it. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians:13,

> If I speak in the tongues of men or I speak in the tongues of angels, but I don't have love, I am only a sounding horn or a tinkling cymbal. And if I can prophesy so that I know all mysteries and can divine all secrets, or if I have so much faith that I can remove mountains, but I don't have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything that I have or if I deliver my body to be burned, but I don't have love, it's all for nothing. (My own translation.)

Submission to the Will of God

God loves you and does not want you to suffer, even though there is a huge amount of suffering in the world he is creating. The point is not to say, "I know my suffering is the will of God," but to work to be happy and to unfold beauty. The will of God is the celebration of life. Live fully and love deeply. Isn't that what those who truly love you want for you?

The temptation of love is to suffer for the good of others. Like Martin Luther King, Jr., we might risk death for those we love. But we should only go as far as we have to, preserving our own precious selves as much as we can. Each of us is unique, beautiful, and beloved. Do not lose yourself in attempts to help other people if it's not necessary or doesn't come from love. God loves you. You have as much right to live and be happy as other people do.

Chapter 19
A Collection of Other Methods

In this chapter I give brief introductions to several other methods for producing spiritual experience, along with references to where you can find more information. These methods can be profound and I recommend them highly.

Stanislav Groff's Holotropic Breathwork

Holotropic Breathwork is a non-drug method developed by Dr. Stanislav Grof (born in 1931) and his late wife, Christina Grof, that can induce non-ordinary states of consciousness similar to those produced by psychedelic drugs. It uses a combination of altered breathing, evocative music, and special bodywork to accomplish this goal. I like the word holotropic, which means, according to its Greek roots, "moving toward wholeness." But I think it was a mistake to use it as a label for the breathwork process, since no one remembers what it means when they see it. Everyone has a feel for the meaning of "psychedelic." Take a drug and have a trip. But no one has a feel for holotropic. Grof objects to the term "altered states of consciousness" because it implies that everyday consciousness is the correct baseline consciousness. He prefers the term non-ordinary states of consciousness. But, he says, there are many non-ordinary states that are not both healing and revealing, such as psychoses, alcohol intoxication, or opioid highs. He invented the term "holotropic states of consciousness" to cover states like mystical experiences, psyche-

delic trips, and shamanic journeys in which the depths of the mind are made clear to an individual. Since "holotropic" remains a Greek mystery, I am going to substitute the term "depth-manifesting" for holotropic.

Grof has been the premier researcher into psychedelic states in the twentieth century. Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1931, he holds both a PhD in medical science and an MD. He also is a trained psychoanalyst. One day early in his career an LSD sample arrived at his laboratory labeled as a psychotomimetic substance. Seeking to better understand the inner experience of his psychotic patients, he took the drug and had an overwhelming revelation of the profound depths of the cosmos. (These remarks are based on lecture material I heard him give years ago.) From there he worked for four years doing laboratory research on LSD, psilocybin, mescaline, tryptamine derivatives, and other psychedelic drugs. After that he spent seven years doing psychedelic psychotherapy at the Prague Psychiatric Research Institute. He was invited to come to the United States and spent the next seven years doing research on psychedelic psychotherapy in association with Johns Hopkins University. There he was head of the last surviving research project on psychedelic psychotherapy after psychedelics were classified as illegal in 1970.

From 1973 to 1987 he was scholar-in-residence at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, where he developed his method of Holotropic (depth-manifesting) Breathwork. He has trained over 2,000 Depth-manifesting Breathwork facilitators around the world and has published over 160 papers and 22 books, with the books being translated into 23 languages. He founded the International Transpersonal Association and was its president for many years. He is also a professor of psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.

Christina Grof was raised on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. During her childhood she was emotionally and sexually abused by her stepfather for a long period of time. She graduated from Sarah Lawrence College and became a gifted art teacher and yoga instructor. Later she struggled with two crises in her life, a period of alcoholism and an awakening of Kundalini spiritual energy. She was able to transform both of these crises into instruments for human healing. Through organizing conferences, she was able to create a bridge between transpersonal psychology and addiction studies. She also created a series of paintings about her recovery from alcoholism that have been important to many people. In response to her Kundalini awakening she created the Spiritual Emergency Network, an organization that helps people going through non-ordinary episodes with the idea that these episodes may not be mental breakdowns but spiritual crises. She contributed a great deal to our understanding of the spiritual source and resolution of what may look like psychoses to psychiatrists and how to work with them as spiritual, transformational emergencies. Along with her husband she was also the co-creator of Holotropic (depth-manifesting) Breathwork. She died in June of 2014.

There are numerous clips of Dr. Grof on YouTube and many of his books are on Amazon. The most complete exploration of his depth-manifesting method is in *Holotropic Breathwork: A New Approach to Self-Exploration and Therapy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010). Kylea Taylor has also written three books about Holotropic Breathwork that are very useful. http://www.holotropic.com/

Felicitas Goodman's Religious Trance Using Shamanic Postures

Felicitas Goodman (1914–2005) was an anthropologist who learned how to induce a religious trance using the sound of a gourd rattle in conjunction with postures used by shamans in practicing their skills. These postures were taken from images of shamans on ancient artifacts and artworks. Through her trance method using the gourd rattle it became possible to induce altered states of consciousness that consistently led, depending on the posture used, to different shamanic powers: divination, spirit journeys, shape shifting, healing, and initiation.

Goodman was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1914 and later received a master's degree in language translation from the University of Heidelberg. She fell in love with and married an American from Columbus, Ohio, and the two settled in Germany where they had three children. After the Second World War burned over Europe, her family moved to America where she earned her living as a multilingual scientific translator in the fields of metallurgy, biochemistry, and medicine. In 1965 at age 51 she became a graduate student in linguistics at Ohio State University. She took a class there with the anthropologist Erika Bourguignon and later was hired by Bourguignon as a translator on a project sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health to assess altered states of consciousness in indigenous societies. Goodman worked to translate relevant foreign anthropological literature. The project concluded that altered states were normal, not psychotic manifestations, and that dissociation, trance, and altered states were present as part of religious ritual in almost all indigenous societies. She went on to earn degrees in linguistics and anthropology.

In 1978 she founded the Cuyamungue Institute to facilitate training in her methods of reaching alternate realities using shamanic postures and rhythms. She died in 2005, but the Institute is still carrying on her work. Her anthropological work on speaking in tongues has been important in my own thinking.
https://www.cuyamungueinstitute.com/

Dr. Goodman's most significant book is *Where the Spirits Ride the Wind: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1990). Don't miss section one, the Search for the Spirits! It gives a history of her research into religious trance and shamanic postures. See also her books *Ecstatic Trance: New Ritual Body Postures, A Workbook* and *Ecstasy, Ritual and Alternate Reality: Religion in a Pluralistic World*. Two books by Belinda Gore are also very useful: *Ecstatic Body Postures: An Alternate Reality Workbook* and *The Ecstatic Experience: Healing Postures for Spirit Journeys*.

Brian David Phillips and Emotional Flooding

Brian David Phillips is an associate professor at Taiwan's National Cheng-Chi University. He is also an accomplished hypnotist who has worked out methods for intensifying emotional experiences, including spiritual experiences. You can find him on YouTube and on the internet. His website is flamboyant, but don't let that put you off. He really does know what he is talking about.
https://briandavidphillips.net/

Shakuntala Modi and Age Regression to Before the Creation

Shakuntala Modi is a board-certified psychiatrist who has been in private practice for more than 25 years. While doing hypnotherapy, without suggesting it, she had clients who regressed to past lives or spoke, saying that they were spirit entities possessing the client. She developed methods for resolving past life problems and releasing spirit entities and claims to be able to cure 70 to 80 percent of her clients using these methods.

In *Memories of God and Creation: Remembering from the Subconscious Mind* (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 2000) she describes her exploration of hypnotic regression to before the creation when we were still one with God.

Because her world view is so radically different from scientific materialism, the tendency is to dismiss her findings as being impossible. Speaking for those who believe in a spiritual reality, however, I would like to see her work investigated and repeated. If 70 to 80 percent of psychiatric clients can be cured using these methods, does it matter what her world view is? That is an unprecedented cure rate. You can always believe in the method and not in the rationale.

Regression to before the creation when we were still one with God may be a powerful trance method to produce a spiritual experience of our latent mystical abilities, be they a contact with transcendent reality or simply a capability of our everyday biological brain.

Brad and Hillary Keeney's Sacred Ecstatics

Brad and Hillary are spiritual teachers of mine. As a psychologist I can tell you that they are the most spontaneously creative people that I have ever met. Their work focuses on using music to reach spiritually ecstatic states. https://sacredecstatics.com/

Transpersonal Hypnotherapy

Interesting books that take a transpersonal (spiritual) approach to hypnotherapy:

Eric D. Leskowitz, MD (ed.), *Transpersonal Hypnosis: Gateway to Body, Mind, and Spirit* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2000).

Jack Elias, *Finding True Magic: Transpersonal Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy/NLP*, 2nd ed. (Seattle, WA: Five Wisdoms Press, 2005).

C. Roy Hunter (ed.), *The Art of Spiritual Hypnosis: Accessing Divine Wisdom* (Denver, CO: Blooming Twig Books, 2016).

Allen Chips, DCH, PhD, *Clinical Hypnotherapy: A Transpersonal Approach,* 2nd ed. (Transpersonal Publishing, 2006).

Holly S. Holmes-Meredith, *Spiritual Hypnotherapy Scripts: For Body, Mind, and Spirit* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014).

Image Training

The psychologist and hypnotist William Fezler has written two books that show how to improve your powers of visualization. These are *Imagery for Healing, Knowledge, and Power* and *Creative Imagery: How to Visualize in All Five Senses*. Hypnotherapy often involves sensory imagery conditioning. In order to increase the effectiveness of his therapy, Dr. Fezler worked out ways to intensify sense memory. In doing this he encountered spiritual experiences with some clients.

Monroe Institute Programs

In 1958 Robert Monroe, the head of a radio production company, started to have out-of-body experiences. Over a number of years he developed methods using sound patterns that helped other people reach altered states of consciousness. These sound patterns were called hemi-sync, because they help synchronize the two hemispheres of the brain. The Monroe Institute offers retreats and recordings using his methods. The CIA has recently released a report that it did in 1983 on the effectiveness of the Monroe Gateway program.

https://www.monroeinstitute.org/
https://www.vice.com/en/article/7k9qag/how-to-escape-the-confines-of-time-and-space-according-to-the-cia

Insight Timer

This a free app that you can download from the App Store. It has over 70,000 guided meditations available. You can pick and choose from an enormous number of spiritual teachers, experience their methods, and work on a variety of your own goals for growth.

Bernard S. Aaronson

Bernard Aaronson was a psychologist who worked with hypnosis to change a subject's perception of time and space. These changes could induce results similar to psychedelic experience. See the article by Paul Sacerdote in this book for one way of using Aaronson's work to produce mystical experience.

For a reprint of "Hypnosis, Depth Perception, and Psychedelic Experience," see Charles T. Tart, ed., *Altered States of Consciousness: A Book of Readings*, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969, 263-70.

See also:

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Depth Perception, and Schizophrenia," Paper, Eastern Psychological Association, Philadelphia, 1964.

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Being, and the Conceptual Categories of Time," Paper, New Jersey Psychological Association, Princeton, 1965.

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Depth Perception, and Psychedelic Experience," Paper, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, New York, 1965.

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Time Rate Perception, and Psychopathology," Paper, Eastern Psychological Association, New York, 1966.

Aaronson, B. "Behavior and the Place Names of Time," *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 1966, 1-18.

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Responsibility, and the Boundaries of Self," *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 1967, 229-245.

Aaronson, B. "Distance, depth, and schizophrenia," *Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* 9(3), 1967: 203-207.

Aaronson, B. "Mystic and Schizophreniform States and the Experience of Depth." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 6, 1967: 246-252.

Aaronson, B. "Hypnosis, Time Rate Perception and Personality," *Journal of Schizophrenia* 2 1968: 11–41.

Aaronson, B. "Time, Time Stance, and Existence," *Studium Generale* 24 (Springer-Verlag) 1971: 369–387.

He published a series of articles in volume 26 of *The Journal of the American Society of Psychosomatic Dentistry and Medicine* in 1979, called "Hypnotic Induction of the Void," in which he explores techniques for inducing mystical experience.

Part 1 pages 22-30 issue 1.

Part 2 pages 63-72 issue 2.

Part 3 pages 113-117 issue 3.

Part 4 pages 129-133 issue 4.

PART THREE

The Religious Use of Trance

Chapter 20
Jesus the Mystic

INTRODUCTION

I have been interested in Christianity and the historical Jesus for what seems my entire life. I was raised Catholic, went to an Episcopalian high school, and took a course from the famous biblical scholar Krister Stendahl when I went to Harvard. In my late twenties I went through a long illness and turned to studying the New Testament to try to figure out the meaning of it all. After I recovered, I found that I had acquired a permanent interest. I read innumerable books on Jesus and early Christianity, searching for their original secrets, secrets now long buried beneath the welter of Christian denominational dogma. I began to write articles about my insights. Now, forty years later, after writing portions of this book on trance and spiritual experience, it has all come together for me, and I can offer you my understanding of what happened so long ago in Galilee. I can tell you the hidden secrets of early Christianity.

Jesus was a Jewish mystic who practiced visionary trance ascensions to the heavenly temple to see the Glory and Image of God. He was transfigured by the divine light and had mystical expe-

riences of union with God. These led him to believe that he was the divine Son of Man, the Messiah. He would be the judge of the world on the last day, a day that he saw as coming soon. He taught his disciples the technique of visionary trance ascension until they too had experience of the divine glory. When they were prepared, when they were copies of himself, he sent them out to heal the sick and tell the world about the coming kingdom of God, warning them to prepare for it by cultivating love. It is possible for us in our current day and age to practice the same technique of visionary trance ascension to the divine glory, to be transfigured by the divine light, and to experience oneness with God and divine love.

Was Jesus a human being who identified with God during his ascensions? Or was he a part of God himself who recovered his divine identity when he encountered the glory? That is something for you to decide. What is really important is that we follow in his footsteps.

This article presupposes some knowledge of biblical studies. If you feel it is too difficult for you, please read the section at the end of the article titled Historical Background for Jesus the Mystic and then try again. I have tried to put everything you need to know in this background section.

JESUS THE MYSTIC

ABSTRACT

Jesus was a Jewish mystic who practiced visionary trance ascensions to the heavenly temple to see the Kavod, the Glory and Image of God. Much of his mysticism of Light is recoverable from the Gospel of Thomas. The biblical scholar April DeConick has identified the Gospel of Thomas as having traditions of early Jewish mysticism

which taught visionary ascent to see God on his throne. Jesus' ascensions were patterned after those of Enoch in 1 Enoch and 2 Enoch. Even if he did not read these documents, their ideas were circulating in the Judaism of his time. He was transfigured in the heaven world by being wrapped in a garment of glory and named Son of Man. This was the source for his self-understanding as the Son of Man. Mystical experiences frequently involve merging with divine light and result in the realization that love is the fundamental principle of the world. Jesus' teachings about love come from his mystical experiences with the divine glory. Modern psychological research has shown that when people with a high trance capacity go to the deepest levels of trance, they have experiences very similar to those found in the mystical state. Jesus chose his disciples for their trance capacity and trained them in visionary ascension. An analysis of Pentecost in relation to 1 Enoch's Book of the Watchers shows that the disciples were practicing visionary trance ascension that day. Their trance state led to an outbreak of speaking in tongues. An analysis of the phrase, "Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves," shows that the dove during the descent of the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism was a symbol for Wisdom, the female aspect of God. Wisdom was identified with the Holy Spirit in the book The Wisdom of Solomon. Going beyond male and female in the Gospel of Thomas was not a return to the radiant being of the original androgynous Adam but an actual merging with the Image of God during which the male mystic was completed by receiving the female Holy Spirit. This is the source for early Christian teachings on celibacy.

I recently did an online search of the 3,652 pages of the *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*[1] for the word "mysticism." Of the 115 articles in the book only three talked about mysticism in any detail.[2] This is astonishing to me. We know that Jesus had a major spiritual experience when he was baptized by John. We know that the fourth Gospel reports that Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). And we know that the most likely way that the man Jesus came to be worshipped as God is that he told his disciples that he was God, or at least some aspect of God. I believe that he had a mystical experience of union at his baptism by John. Later he had recurrences of the ecstatic state.

Jesus' self-understanding as the Son of Man

This paper will try to work out the details of the mystical experience Jesus had at his baptism and how it determined his self-understanding as the Son of Man.

The expression "the Son of Man" appears only in the sayings of Jesus. It occurs eighty-one times in the four Gospels, far more than any other phrase of self-understanding. Here is a quote from Daniel 7 about the Son of Man:

> Thrones were set in place and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. … In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of

[1] Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 4 volumes.

[2] Bruce Chilton, "Method in a Critical Study of Jesus." Craig Evans, "Prophet, Sage, Healer, Messiah, and Martyr: Types and Identities of Jesus." Crispin Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus and Apocalypticism."

> Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed (Dan. 7:9-14).[3]

Daniel is the first book in the Bible to refer to the resurrection.

> There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever (Dan. 12:1-3).

Already in 1 Thessalonians, the earliest of the Pauline epistles, we see Jesus presented as the Son of Man. "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). "Caught up in the clouds" derives from "coming with the clouds of heaven" in Dan. 7:13. The quote from 1 Thessalonians derives both from the Son of Man and the resurrection material in Daniel.

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[3] Unless otherwise noted, quotes are from the following sources: Bible quotes are from the New International Version (NIV). Quotes from 1 Enoch are from Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1985). Quotes from the Gospel of Thomas are from Stevan Davies translation in *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 2nd ed. (Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2003) or from the Thomas O. Lambdin translation in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd ed., ed. James M. Robinson (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988).

1 Thessalonians was written well after Paul had spent fifteen days in Jerusalem receiving personal instruction from Peter, Jesus' head disciple, and had consulted with James, Jesus' brother (Gal. 1:18-19). It seems to me highly unlikely that Paul would get the transmission wrong. Jesus really did believe he was the Son of Man.

The Son of Man was to be given authority, glory, and kingly power by the Ancient of Days. "All nations and peoples of every language *worshipped* him" (Dan. 7:14, my emphasis). J. A. Emerton writes, "The act of coming with clouds suggests a theophany of Yahweh himself. If Dan. Vii. 13 does not refer to a divine being, then it is the only exception out of about seventy passages in the OT."[4] The pre-Christian Similitudes of Enoch[5] uses Daniel 7:13 (1 Enoch 46:1) and quite clearly shows the Son of Man as preexistent before the creation. "And at that time the Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits … And before the sun and the [constellations] were created, Before the stars of the heavens were made, His name was named before the Lord of Spirits" (1 Enoch 48:2-3).[6] Daniel Boyarin points out that even if the Similitudes of Enoch did not have a direct influence on early Christianity, it shows that ideas about a divine Son of Man redeemer were circulating in Judaism around the time of Christ, and that these ideas were beginning to fuse with ideas about the human Messiah;[7] 1 Enoch 48:10 and 52:4 call the Son of

[4] J. A. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," *Journal of Theological Studies* 9, no. 2 (1958): 231–32. See also Markus Zehnder, "Why the Danielic 'Son of Man' Is a Divine Being," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 24, no. 3 (2014): 331–47.

[5] "Recent scholarship has affirmed a late first-century BCE (during the reign of Herod the Great) or early first-century CE date for these chapters, which means these chapters are Jewish and pre-Christian." Charles Gieschen, "The Importance of the Parables of *1 Enoch* for Understanding the Son of Man in the Four Gospels," in *Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism: Studies in Honor of Alexander Golitzin*, ed. Andrei Orlov (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 2020), 53.

[6] For arguments about pre-existence see James Waddell, *The Messiah: A Comparative Study of the Enochic Son of Man and the Pauline Kyrios* (London: T&T Clark International, 2011), 60–63.

[7] Daniel Boyarin, The Jewish Gospels: *The Story of the Jewish Christ*, chap. 2 (New

Man the Anointed, in other words the Messiah. In 1 Enoch 71:14 a human being, Enoch, is designated the Son of Man.

In the context of John's baptism, Jesus saw himself as the Coming One, the Son of Man from Daniel 7:13, who would baptize with the spirit and with fire. He was here to offer one last chance for salvation and would come again in the future on the clouds of heaven to render judgment and rule forever. The Sanhedrin thought that Jesus was claiming divinity and considered it a horrible blasphemy.

The high priest questioned Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus, "and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of heaven." At this, the high priest tore his clothes and declared, "Why do we need any more witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What is your verdict?" And they all condemned him as deserving of death (Mark 14:61-64).

It was not a crime to be the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One. It was a criminal blasphemy, however, to be *worshipped* as a divine being, the one like unto a son of man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of heaven. Because outsiders would condemn him for blasphemy, Jesus only told his inner circle of disciples that he was the preexistent Son of Man. To those beyond the inner circle, he was a prophet possessed by the Holy Spirit of God, able to heal and forgive sins and proclaim the coming of the Son of Man.

Evidence for mysticism in the teachings of Jesus

Later in Christian times, when Jesus was worshipped as God, to

York: The New Press, 2012). The J. A. Emerton quote above comes from this source as well.

say that he was a man who had had a mystical experience was to commit a horrible blasphemy. Hence to this day, we barely ever hear about Jesus being a mystic. And this denial is maintained in the face of the Gospel of Thomas, a set of the secret sayings of Jesus which may go back to earliest Christian times, that is sheer mysticism. We have had the Gospel of Thomas for over sixty years. If the mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas didn't come from Jesus, where in the world did it come from and why did the mystics who wrote it invent a sayings gospel of the secret words of Jesus to convey their message? H. E. W. Turner writes in *Thomas and the Evangelists*,[8] "The spirituality implied in the Gospel of Thomas is a type of unitive mysticism. The theme of unity runs throughout the document as a whole."

Consider that Jesus told us to love God with our whole soul and to love our neighbor, too. Love not only our neighbor but our enemies as well. Love our prodigal son who has squandered half of our hard-earned fortune on wild living. Love tax collectors and sinners, and even those heretical Samaritans. We are to forgive seventy times seven times. Even forgive the people who are crucifying us.

> You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor" and "Hate your enemy." But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Do not even tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even Gentiles do the same? (Matt. 5:43-47)

[8] H. E. W. Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, (London: Allenson, 1962), 105.

This is not a man speaking warning messages from God in a fit of prophecy. This is a man drenched in divine love. This is a mystic.

Basically, he is saying to love everyone and forgive everyone. If you act like God in your love and forgiveness, then when the reign of God comes, you will have a share in the Kingdom. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." But how does he know that God loves everyone and forgives those who are forgiving? Because he has had mystical union with God and knows the heart of the Father.

Here is Beatrice of Nazareth, a mystic who lived in Belgium during the twelve-hundreds, writing about divine love:

> It happens sometimes that a sweet and joyful love is awakened in the heart and swells like a great wave through the soul by itself without any effort on our part. One is so powerfully moved by love, so passionately drawn up into love, so strongly taken by love, so tenderly embraced and utterly mastered by love that she surrenders herself entirely to its power. In this embrace the soul experiences directly the radiance of the Divine, a wonderful bliss, pure freedom, ecstatic sweetness, complete overpowering by love, a waterfall of ineffable delight. She feels that all her senses are sacred, and she is so totally engulfed by love and so deeply immersed in love that she is one with love and will never cease to be love. For the beauty of love has clothed her, the power of love has submerged her, the holiness of love has consumed her, the greatness of love has so sublimely drawn her into herself that she will always love and do nothing but acts of love.[9]

If you love your enemies as well as your friends, then you love every-

[9] Given in Mary Ford-Grabowsky, *Sacred Voices: Essential Women's Wisdom Through the Ages* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002), 68–69.

one. If you love the evil and the good, the just and the unjust, and all those on whom the sun shines and the rain falls, then you love everyone. Your love has become universal and divine.

It is sometimes argued that unitive mysticism implies pantheism, that God is everywhere in all beings, and that Luke 17:20-21 shows pantheism.[10] "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." However, translations of the New Testament frequently say "the kingdom of God is among you" or "in the midst of you" rather than "within you." This has never made much sense to me. The kingdom of God is not a place over here or over there, it's a place right here among you? It's not a place at all. Romans 14:17 tells us, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." The kingdom is Christ and the Holy Spirit inside you. The tradition of the saying in the Gospel of Thomas clearly interprets the meaning as inside (Logion 3): "Jesus said: If those who lead you say to you, 'See, the kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you." For the Gospel of Thomas, the kingdom is everywhere. It is inside of you and outside of you, and hence in everyone else, too. This is in line with the universality of God's love for everyone that Jesus taught. In the Gospel of Thomas Jesus is clearly talking to those who have not yet found the kingdom and telling them that the kingdom is inside of them. Logion 3 continues: "When you understand yourselves you will be understood. And you will realize that you are Sons of the living Father." In Luke, Jesus is talking to the Pharisees who ask him when the kingdom of God will come. Does Jesus mean then that the kingdom is in the midst of the Pharisees? Perhaps his reply means that you won't be able to see the

[10] I'm using pantheism to mean that all things are part of an all-encompassing, immanent God. I don't mean to say that God isn't personal and transcendent as well. Call it panentheism if you have to. For a deeper understanding of pantheism see Walter Stace, "Pantheism, Dualism, and Monism," in *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961).

kingdom coming in the future, it's already here now in your midst. But this doesn't fit the context at all. He goes on to talk about the day of the Son of Man coming like a lightning flash that lights up the sky from one side to the other. You won't be able to see it coming. It will come without warning (Luke 17:22-37). In other words, it is not already here in your midst. The Gospel of Thomas gives the correct understanding of the saying. Luke 17:20-37 means that the kingdom is coming in the future without warning, but it is also inside you now, waiting for you to reach in and find it. Everyone has the possibility of finding God inside. This sounds like the pantheism of unitive mysticism to me. Jesus sent out his messengers to preach the coming kingdom to all people. The kingdom is near. Begin to love the way God loves, with universal love, and you can find the kingdom in yourself now and be included in the future kingdom when it comes. In the great commission Jesus says, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). The people of all nations have the possibility of finding God within themselves.

Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas Logion 77 is a direct statement of unitive mysticism.

> Jesus said: I am the light above everything. I am everything. Everything came forth from me, and everything reached me [returns to me?]. Split wood, I am there. Lift up a rock and you will find me.

Walter Stace has distinguished two types of mystical experience, the extravertive and the introvertive. In extravertive mysticism the mystic finds God in everything perceived by the senses. In introvertive mysticism the mystic finds God at the center of the Self. Here are two of the examples he gives for extravertive mysticism:[11]

[11] Walter T. Stace, *The Teachings of the Mystics* (New York: The New American Library, 1960), 16.

> Meister Eckhart (1260–1329): Here all blades of grass, wood, and stone, all things are One.
>
> Jakob Böhme (1575–1624): In this light my spirit saw through all things and into all creatures and I recognized God in grass and plants.

Logion 77 is both introvertive and extravertive. It is Jesus saying: I am the divine light. All things exist through me and I am in all things, in every tree and every stone. Logion 3 says the Kingdom is inside of you, inside all human beings. Between them they mean that God is immanent in all beings. This is the realization of the unity of all things in mystical experience. All is one.

Here are three other sayings about light from the Gospel of Thomas: (24) There is light within a man of light, and it lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, there is darkness; (61) If one is unified one will be filled with light, but if one is divided one will be filled with darkness; (50) Jesus says: If they ask you, "Where are you from?" say to them, "We have come from the light. The place where the light created itself."[12]

Divine light is frequently a part of mystical experience. For example, the mystic Ellina von Crevelsheim writes that she was absorbed in divine Love and lifted up to an immediate experience of the Absolute where she "saw the interior of the Father's heart" and was "bound with chains of love, enveloped in light, and filled with peace and joy."[13]

In 1901 the Canadian psychiatrist Richard M. Bucke published a book called *Cosmic Consciousness: A Study in the Evolution*

[12] My own phrasing for Logion 50.

[13] Cited in chapter 8 of Evelyn Underhill's book *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (London: Methuen, 1911), note 760.

of the Human Mind. In the preface he says that in the spring of his 36th year he spent an evening with friends reading poetry—Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Browning, and especially Whitman. On his way home he had an extraordinary experience.

> He was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment. All at once, without warning of any kind, he found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame-colored cloud. For an instant he thought of fire, some sudden conflagration in the great city; the next, he knew that the light was within himself. Directly afterwards came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Into his brain streamed one momentary lightning-flash of the Brahmic Splendor which has ever since lightened his life; upon his heart fell one drop of Brahmic Bliss, leaving thenceforward for always an aftertaste of heaven. Among other things he did not come to believe, he saw and knew, that the Cosmos is not dead but a living Presence, that the soul of man is immortal, that the universe is so built and ordered that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love and that the happiness of every one is in the long run absolutely certain.[14]

The contemporary mystic Sophy Burnham writes of her most powerful encounter with God:

[14] *Cosmic Consciousness: A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind* (Boston: E. P. Dutton, 1901), 9–10, https://www.sacred-texts.com/eso/cc/cc00.htm.

> I was immersed in a sweetness words cannot express. I could hear the singing of the planets, and wave after wave of light washed over me. But this is wrong, because I *was* the light as well, without distinction of self or of being washed. … At one level I ceased to exist, was swallowed into light. How long that lasted I do not know.
>
> [After I returned to my senses:] When I looked down, I saw light streaming off the palms of my hands. I could feel it pulsing off my palms in waves, like hot currents. I could see it flaring, flashing in everything; the fields were shining with light. And so were the people gathered at the hotel, some drinking pisco sours, talking to one another and shining with their inner light.
>
> Later we took the train from Machu Picchu back to Cuzco. I rode in a wild and joyous state, knowing that all creation is perfect and is most perfectly composed of love.[15]

Here is a trance-induced mystical experience in a young cancer patient reported by Dr. Ronald Havens. Note how easily a spiritual state develops during this hypnosis session.

> Several years after her graduation … Helen … called me and asked for my help with her intense pain. She had cancer, untreatable terminal cancer. During our first session I guided her into a trance and told her simply that her unconscious mind could now use the openness of her trance state to provide those things she needed. Within a few minutes she stiffened a bit, then smiled broadly and just sat there smiling for over 30 minutes.

[15] Sophy Burnham, *The Ecstatic Journey: Walking the Mystical Path in Everyday Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997), 78–81.

> Afterwards she explained that she had just been sitting there in a kind of blank waiting state when she began to feel surrounded by a warm light that became brighter and brighter and eventually became such an intensely brilliant light that the energy of it seemed to penetrate every cell in her body, at which point she could no longer tell where the light began and where she ended. She felt herself merge with the warm energy of that light, and then she "knew" that the light was everything around her, a vast unity of loving energy that is everything and everyone. She said that this "understanding" was followed by a feeling of overwhelming peace and by a realization that at that moment she was feeling no pain at all.
>
> Helen was quite excited as she told me all of this afterwards and even cried a bit, apparently tears of happiness or joy. She said she was no longer afraid of death, and no longer afraid of her pain. I was later told that she continued to use trance on her own until her death a few months later.[16]

There are hints of this mysticism of light in the New Testament.

> And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light (Matt. 17:2).
>
> The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness (Matt. 6:22-23).
>
> If then your whole body is full of light, having no part

[16] Ronald Havens, *Self Hypnosis for Cosmic Consciousness: Achieving Altered States, Mystical Experiences and Spiritual Enlightenment* (Bethel, CT: Crown House, 2007), Loc 280–86 of the Kindle version in the section titled "My Pursuit of Cosmic Consciousness."

> dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light (Luke 11:36).
>
> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear (Matt. 13:43).
>
> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world (John 1:9).
>
> Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).
>
> Now as he journeyed, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him (Acts 9:3).
>
> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5).

There are two sequential sayings in the Gospel of Thomas about images and light, 83 and 84, that give us a deeper understanding of this mysticism of light.

> (84) "Jesus said: When you see the likeness of yourselves, you are delighted. But when you see the images of yourselves which came into being before you—they neither die nor are visible—how much you will suffer!"[17]

Here is the idea of an immortal soul, not visible to other people, that you yourself can come to see. It's not like seeing yourself in a mirror, however, where you are delighted with your image. When

[17] From April DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation* (London: T&T Clark International, 2007), 248.

you come to see your soul, there will be great suffering. Why is there suffering? Saying 83 gives us the answer.

> (83) "Jesus said: The images are revealed to people. The light within them is hidden in the image of the Father's light. He will be revealed. His image is hidden in his light."

When you come to see your soul, your immortal image, you can see no divine light within that soul. You will suffer horribly because you will think you have to live with all the pain of your life for an eternity.[18] But you can find your own divine light in the image of the Father. Where is his image? His image is hidden in his light. To find the image of the Father and hence your own light, then, you have to meditate on the light of the Father. April DeConick explains how the image is hidden in the Father's light in her book *Seek to See Him:*

> Moreover, there is a primitive Jewish tradition that teaches that one could not directly see God himself. This tradition goes back to the Exodus story where Moses is told that no one can see God face to face (Exod. 33:20).
>
> Because of this belief, there developed the theology of

[18] This is obviously my interpretation of the suffering. There are other possibilities. (56) "Whoever has known the world has found a corpse." We see that it is all dead, but letting go of money, respect, and even gender may be more than we can bear. (68) "Blessed are you when they hate and persecute you." Your new attitude to the world may cause people to loathe and despise you. (16) "I have come to throw disagreement upon the world, and fire, and sword, and struggle." But the struggle is worth it. (69) "Blessed are those who have been persecuted within themselves. They have really come to know the Father." Perhaps this should be, "Blessed within themselves are those who have been persecuted." (58) Jesus said, "Blessed is the man who has suffered and found life." (Lambdin translation. Blatz also has "suffered" here, not "labored.") (2) "When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the All." (Lambdin. Note that neither the Oxyrhynchus fragment nor Clement of Alexandria's parallel saying from the Gospel of the Hebrews has any mention of "troubled.")

> God's Glory or his Kavod which concealed God while at the same time revealing him. …a bodily form in the appearance of a human being was attributed to the Glory (i.e., Exod 33:18-34:8). This is quite developed in Ezekiel. The prophet recounts that he saw in a heavenly vision, a "likeness as the appearance of a man…" seated on the Throne Chariot (1:26). He describes the enthroned deity as follows in 1:27:
>
> And upward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire enclosed round about; and downward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him.
>
> Ezekiel states that this radiant light deity, this Man-like form, is the "Glory (kavod) of Yahweh" (1:28; cf. 8:2; 9:3-4; 10:4; 11:22-23; 43:1-5; 44:1-2; 47:1). The term "image" or "likeness" was synonymous with "form," "body," and "glory." So, the Glory, God's "body" or "image," was believed to be surrounded by radiant light, and when the mystic looked at God, he saw this light-man seated on the Throne.
>
> Therefore, in the mystical tradition, we find that God's Kavod can be beheld by prepared mystics. Otherwise, it is "hidden" from view.[19]

"His image is hidden in his light." To find the image then, the appearance of the Body of God, you must have a vision of the light of the Kavod, the Glory of God. We will discuss what to do when you have found the image later in this paper.

[19] April DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1996), 101–02.

So far Jesus has told us (Logion 77) that he is the light above everything. Split wood, he is there. Lift up a rock and you will find him. Logion 24: That this light is within a man of light, and it lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, there is darkness. Logion 83: To find the light within your own soul, you must meditate on the Father's light to find the Father's image. Logion 50: Followers of Jesus can say, we have come from the light. The place where the light created itself.

Logion 61 tells us: "If one is unified one will be filled with light, but if one is divided one will be filled with darkness." What does being unified mean? In Logion 2 Jesus says, "Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the All."[20] The object then is to rule over the All, just as Jesus does when he says he is the light above all things in Logion 77. "I am everything. Everything came forth from me." Behind the appearance of the many is the unity of the One. When you are unified, when you merge in mystic union with the one thing behind all things, you will be filled with the divine light.

In Logion 106 Jesus says, "When you make the two one, you will become the sons of man [true human beings], and when you say, 'Mountain, move away,' it will move away." When you are undivided, when the two become one, when you are filled with light, when you rule over the All, then you will be able to heal and perform miracles.

Beyond the opposites, a pathway to mystical experience

In Gospel of Thomas 11 Jesus says, "When you come to dwell in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one you

[20] Thomas O. Lambdin translation.

became two. But when you become two, what will you do?" This means, I believe, that after you have the mystical experience of the unity of all things in the light you return to normal awareness. Then you have to decide what you are going to do to change your life so that you can live in that unity.

But how do you realize the unity of the One in the first place and how do you get back to it if you have lost it?

In Logion 22 Jesus says, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female … then you will enter the kingdom."

This is a formula for going beyond the opposites. The light of the divine mind contains all things, it is not limited to the inside or the outside, the above or the below, the male or the female. While you are meditating on the light of the Father you should draw these contrasts and go beyond them to the one mind behind them. Then you can begin to rule over the All.

You can see Paul using this formula when he says, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

You can see Jesus using this formula when he says, "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matt. 5:44-45). Jesus is using the opposites of good and evil, righteous and unrighteous, to go beyond them to the universality of the divine.

You can see this formula in the gnostic tractate *Thunder: Perfect Mind*.

> For I am the first and the last.
> I am the honored one and the scorned one.
> I am the whore and the holy one.
> I am the wife and the virgin. …
> I am the barren one
> and many are her sons.
> I am she whose wedding is great,
> and I have not taken a husband…
> I am the solace of my labor pains.[21]

Thunder: Perfect Mind uses opposites in a very paradoxical way to go beyond the ordinary word-based mind. Mystical experience has long been recognized to be both ineffable and paradoxical. With the use of paradox within opposites, logical speech breaks down and another form of awareness breaks through. This is similar to the use of koans in Zen meditation. During a trance-like state the mind is focused on a phrase that is illogical, like, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" The result is a sudden *satori* illumination. If a man memorizes the discourse in *Thunder: Perfect Mind* and then repeats it to himself while in a deep trance, he not only drenches his mind in paradoxical opposites, he himself becomes a paradoxical opposite. He becomes both a man and a woman, because he is physically a man, but he is speaking as a woman. The exercise is designed to take him beyond reason and speech into the divine mystery.

In my book *Easy Ecstasy: Using Hypnosis to Produce Mystical Experience,*[22] I try to bring together what modern psychological

[21] James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988), 297.

[22] Daniel N. Washburn, *Easy Ecstasy: Using Hypnosis to Produce Mystical Experience* (Rockville, MD: Ocean of Love Press, 2022).

research has found about the relationship between deep trance and spiritual experience. Bernard Aaronson was a pioneering psychologist in this area. He wrote several papers on how hypnotically suggested changes to the way a person experiences space and time can mimic psychedelic and spiritual experience.[23] In 1979 he published a hypnosis script called "Hypnotic Induction of the Void" in a journal on psychosomatic medicine.[24] It is an attempt to hypnotically create mystical experience. He uses trance suggestions to separate the subject from his senses, from his concept of the self, to expand consciousness, and to nullify the opposites. Here is an excerpt. You can see how similar it is to *Thunder, Perfect Mind* and the formula for going beyond the opposites that we have seen in the Gospel of Thomas, Paul, and Jesus.

> You are male. You are female. You are both male and female. You are neither male nor female, but both male and female.
>
> You are young. You are old. You are both young and old, but neither young nor old.
>
> Located in time, but timeless. Bounded in space, but boundless.
>
> You have a past and a present, but neither past nor present, but both past and present. You have a past and a future, but neither past nor future, but both past and future. You have a present and future, but neither present nor future, but both present and future.
>
> You have a left and a right, but neither left nor right, but both left and right. You have a front and a back, but neither front nor back, but both front and back. You have a top and a bottom, but neither top nor bottom, but both top and bottom.

[23] See, for instance, "Hypnosis, Depth Perception, and Psychedelic Experience," in *Altered States of Consciousness: A Book of Readings*, ed. Charles Tart (New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1969), 263–70.

[24] Journal of the American Society for Psychosomatic Dentistry and Medicine, 26, (1979), A four part essay in issues 1, 2 3, and 4.

Wherever you look, universes appear. When you look away, they cease to be, and yet they never were.

In any face that you look are all faces—happy and sad, grotesque and beautiful, light and dark. In any face you can see your own face.

You are here, you are there. You are both here and there, but neither here nor there.

Around and through you everything is in motion, yet nothing moves. And still it moves.

For whatever is, is not, and whatever is not, is , and whatever is, is, and whatever is not, is not, at one and the same time.

Whatever is true is true, whatever is false is false. But whatever is true is false and whatever is false is true at one and the same time.

Origins of the mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas

What is the source for the mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas? In her book *Seek to See Him*, April DeConick has intensively examined some of the most enigmatic Logia in the Gospel of Thomas using a wealth of parallel material from other sources. She concludes, "Detailed analysis of these Logia … demonstrated that they are affiliated with the esoteric tradition of early Jewish mysticism which taught pre-mortem ascent to and vision of the enthroned deity."[25]

The Book of the Watchers, chapters 1-36 of 1 Enoch, dates to 200 to 300 BCE. Chapter 14 describes Enoch's pre-mortem ascent. There he encounters the opposites of fire and ice.

[25] DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 175

> And I went in till I drew near to a wall, built of hailstones, with tongues of fire surrounding it on all sides; and it began to terrify me. And I entered into the tongues of fire and drew near to a large house built of hailstones; and the walls of the house were like tessellated paving stones all of snow and its floor was of snow. Its upper stories were, as if it were, fireballs and lightning… And a flaming fire was around *all* its walls and its doors were ablaze with fire. And I entered into that house and it was hot as fire and cold as snow and there were no delights in it; horror overwhelmed me, and trembling took hold of me. And shaking and trembling, I fell on my face (1 Enoch 14:9-14).

Peter Schäfer tells us, "The dramatic juxtaposition of ice and fire in the building structure of the surrounding wall and the house itself is of major importance in Enoch's vision."[26] It shows a miraculous coexistence of the opposites of fire and ice, hot and cold. They do not destroy each other. These elemental powers and the mystery of their coexistence terrify Enoch and he falls to the ground. Several hundred years later the following appears as a parable appended to the mystical ascent story of the Four Who Entered Paradise. Here is the version from the Tosefta:[27]

> They employed another parable:
> To what may this be compared?
> To a highway
> which passes between
> two roads,
> one of fire and one of snow.

[26] Peter Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 57.

[27] C. R. A. Morray-Jones, *A Transparent Illusion: The Dangerous Vision of Water in Hekhalot Mysticism* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 2002), 10. Versions of the parable appear in the Tosefta and Jerusalem Talmud.

> He who turns aside this way
> is scorched by the fire.
> He who turns away that way
> is scorched by the snow.
> What should a man do?
> Let him walk in the middle
> –only let him not turn aside
> neither this way nor that way.

These are instructions on how to overcome the opposites of fire and ice that are encountered in the mystical ascent to the heavenly temple, the opposites that we saw in the wall surrounding the Temple and in the building itself. Only the divine mind can hold both fire and ice together at the same time. If you want to approach the divine mind, you have to walk in the middle between the two extremes. Is this part of the same tradition of overcoming the opposites in mystical experience that we have seen in the Gospel of Thomas, Jesus, Paul, and *Thunder, Perfect Mind*?[28] If so, we can trace this tradition back to Enoch's ascension in the Book of the Watchers.

There are other places that we can see this tradition of overcoming the opposites. 2 Enoch 29:2 reads, "And fire is in the water and water is in the fire and neither is the one quenched nor the other dried up." 3 Enoch 42 reads, (3) "And I saw fire and snow and hailstone that were mingled together within each other and yet were undamaged, by (force of) the name '*ESH 'OKELA* (consuming fire), as it is written (Deut. iv. 24): "For the Lord, thy God, is a consuming fire." … (7) "And I beheld rivers of fire in the midst of rivers of water and they were not damaged (quenched) by (force of) the name '*OSE SHALOM* (Maker of Peace) as it is written (Job xxv. 2) "He maketh peace in his high places." For he

[28] Ibid. See pages 24–25 for alternative explanations of the parable. Johann Maier also traces it back to the fire and ice in *1 Enoch* 14:13.

makes peace between the fire and the water, between the hail and the fire, between the wind and the cloud, between the earthquake and the sparks."[29]

Jesus induced mystical experience in his disciples

One of the remarkable things about Jesus was his ability to create duplicates of himself. When he sends out the twelve, he sends them out as itinerant exorcists, able to expel demons and heal the sick. They present themselves as poor holy men, without food, knapsack, or money belt, proclaiming, "The kingdom of heaven has come near." In other words, they are copies of Jesus. Jesus believed that he cast out demons by means of the Holy Spirit. "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. … Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matt. 12:28 & 32).

The New Testament says that Jesus gave authority to the twelve to cast out demons and heal the sick (Matt. 10:1, Mark 6:7, Luke 9:1). If he himself cast out demons by the Holy Spirit, it's reasonable to conclude that he anointed the twelve with the Holy Spirit so that they could cast out demons, too. If he had a mystical experience at his baptism by John which gave him the Spirit, then it is also reasonable to conclude that, when he anointed them, he induced mystical experiences in the twelve so that they too received the Spirit.

[29] Hugo Odeberg, 3 *Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1928), 130-132. The quote from 2 Enoch 29 also comes from this source.

But how do you induce a mystical experience? In my book on trance and spiritual experience I review six psychological research studies[30] that show that when a person with extremely good trance capacity descends to the deepest levels of trance, he or she has something very similar to a mystical experience. These experienced hypnotic subjects were not given any hypnotic suggestions, they were just asked to go as deeply into trance as they could go. Every few minutes they were asked what they were experiencing. Here are some of the things they reported during their journey into profound trance.

- Great brightness
- Feelings of joy and wonder
- Thinking in images rather than words
- Time slows and stops
- Sensations of energy moving in the body
- Great darkness
- Sensation of the self floating in an infinite expanse
- Peace, calm, equanimity
- Mind leaving the body and spreading out
- Loss of touch with the environment
- Loss of touch with the body
- Increased meaningfulness

[30] Etzel Cardeña, "The Phenomenology of Deep Hypnosis: Quiescent and Physically Active," International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis 53, no. 1 (2005): 37-59. Milton H. Erickson M.D., "A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley into the Nature and Character of Various States of Consciousness," American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis, 8:1 (1965): 14-33. Brian Elliott Feldman, "A Phenomenological and Clinical Inquiry into Deep Hypnosis," dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1976. Ernest Hilgard, "Deep Hypnosis and It's Characteristics" in his *Divided Consciousness: Multiple Controls in Human Thought and Action* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 1977). Spencer Sherman, "Brief report: Very deep hypnosis," *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 4, no. 1 (1972): 87–91. Spencer Sherman, "Very Deep Hypnosis: An experimental and electroencephalographic investigation," dissertation, Stanford University, 1971. Charles Tart, "Transpersonal potentialities of deep hypnosis," *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 2, no. 1 (1970): 27–40.

- Feelings of awe and wonder, joy and happiness
- A feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable
- Being in touch with one's inner self
- Merging with pure light or energy and finding one's innermost core
- Sense of infinite potentiality
- Loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego"
- Voidness, absolute mental quiet: no thoughts or images
- Oneness, being everything, feeling oneness with everything

Among the six studies there were two case studies, one exploratory study, and three full-scale psychological research studies. Of the full-scale studies, one had ten subjects, another had ten subjects, and one had twelve subjects. All the subjects were near the top on measures of trance capacity. In any given full-scale study, the majority of subjects reported these kinds of experiences. Frequently it is 8 out of 10, 9 out of 10, or 10 out of 10 who report an experience.

Stephan Davies in his book *Spirit Possession and the Origins of Christianity*[31] has already shown numerous similarities between Jesus and the preeminent researcher on hypnosis in the twentieth century, Dr. Milton Erickson. How would Jesus have proceeded to induce mystical experiences using deep hypnotic trance? At his messianic banquet parties, he probably asked people to close their eyes and try to see what he was saying about the world to come. He would describe life under the reign of God, the sowing of crops, the happiness of the harvest, the birth of children, the land flowing with

[31] Dublin: Bardic Press, 2015, 163–73, 224–29. This book is a reprint of his *Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance, and the Origins of Christianity* (New York: Continuum Press, 1995) with new material.

milk and honey. He would describe the messiah and the messianic feasting. "Who among you can really see what I am saying? Raise your hand if it seems as real as everyday life." In this way he could begin to identify people with a very high trance capacity. When they became his followers, he would do more of this guided-imagery work. Since the Gospel of Thomas has its roots in "the esoteric tradition of early Jewish mysticism which taught pre-mortem ascent to and vision of the enthroned deity," we can conclude that when Jesus initiated a follower into discipleship, he would guide that person in deep trance to the throne of God, the Merkabah, and show them the Kavod, the divine light, the Glory of God. Daniel 12:3 reads, "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever." Having beheld the glory, the purified initiate is wrapped in its light. From now on he will live in the light, the Holy Spirit of God. He is reborn from above and can call God, Abba, father. After that, the trip to the heavenly temple to purify oneself and merge with the divine glory becomes a regular exercise in personal contemplative prayer, leading to further mystical experience.

Morton Smith, who was an expert in ancient magical practices, wrote about a technique that Jesus could have developed into a rite of trance ascension. As an itinerant exorcist and healer, Jesus might well have been aware of this technique:

> Provision for a boy as assistant is very frequent in the magical papyri (e.g., *PGM* IV, passim; *DMP*, passim). Most often the boy is the medium; the magician causes him to see the gods. This technique lent itself for development into an initiation, a "mystery of the kingdom of God," by which chosen disciples could be made to believe that they had literally "entered the kingdom."[32]

[32] Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 254.

Visionary trance ascension at Pentecost

Is there any evidence that Jesus' disciples actually practiced trance trips to the heavenly temple?

In Acts, the verses for Pentecost are close to the verses for the ascension of Jesus.

> When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:1-4).

Compare this with the account of Enoch's visionary ascension to the heavenly temple in the Book of the Watchers.

> … winds, in my vision, were bearing me aloft, and they raised me upwards and carried and brought me into the heavens. And I went in till I drew near to a wall, built of hailstones, with tongues of fire surrounding it on all sides; and it began to terrify me. And I entered into the tongues of fire and drew near to a large house built of hailstones; and the walls of the house were like tessellated paving stones all of snow and its floor was of snow (1 Enoch 14:8-10).

There is wind and tongues of fire in both accounts. We can conclude that the disciples were all together in one place practicing visionary ascension during trance. They would be very good at this since they were hypnotic virtuosi with a very high level of trance capacity. We now know that their ascension was based on Enoch's journey in the Book of the Watchers. They would hear and feel the wind lifting

them into the sky. They would move through tongues of fire to reach the heavenly temple. Because ascension was a secret of the inner circle, when Luke came to write Acts, he either wrote down the disguised story he had heard or he himself disguised it, still using detail from the ascension.

The fact that the disciples were practicing visionary trance ascensions helps us understand how speaking in tongues originated at Pentecost. There is no evidence for speaking in tongues when Jesus was alive. Why suddenly was it a major feature of early Christianity? Heather Kavan's article, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness in Two New Zealand Religious Movements,"[33] gives us the clue. Here is a section from the abstract:

> This article examines the prevalence of altered states of consciousness among Christian tongue speakers and compares it to experiences of glossolalia among meditators in a yoga-based purificatory group called the Golden Light. The article is based on close interaction and interviews with participants over an eight-year period. The results showed that, by self-report, most Pentecostals and Charismatics did not experience altered states except during the baptism of the Spirit and that those who did constructed a meaning for their glossolalia. In contrast, all of the meditators described frequent intense altered states, of which speaking in tongues was an occasional manifestation.

The practitioners in a Kundalini Yoga meditation group have frequent intense altered states and occasional spontaneous episodes of speaking in tongues. We can imagine then that while Jesus' disciples were practicing the meditation of visionary trance ascension someone had

[33] *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 19, no. 2 (2004): 171–84.

an episode of speaking in tongues. It ignited another disciple and then another until the whole room was speaking in tongues. In ecstasy and spiritual agitation, the disciples burst out of the house and into the streets. They became known for speaking in tongues and the apostles found that because of their close association with Jesus, they were able to impart the gift of tongues by the laying on of hands. They could do this because the new Christian converts expected it of the spiritual masters who had worked so closely with Jesus.

In the early days of Hasidism, when the Ba'al Shem Tov was alive or still a fresh memory, disciples in ecstatic prayer would shake from the influx of spiritual power, violent movements would occur, and strange sounds would come out of their mouths. People would be moved to ecstatic dancing or even to turning cartwheels.[34] Shaking from the influx of power during a spiritual experience is found in many cultures. Bradford Keeney in his book *Shaking Medicine: The Healing Power of Ecstatic Movement*[35] outlines its history among the Kalahari Bushmen, English Quakers, American Shakers, Japanese practitioners of Seiki Jutsu, Christian disciples who experience the power of the Holy Spirit, and Hindu devotees of Kundalini Shakti. In this kind of state, where the body is seized by the spirit and seems controlled from above, it would be easy for Jesus' disciples to cross over into glossolalia and possession by the Holy Spirit.

The linguist and anthropologist Felicitas Goodman was an expert on speaking in tongues. She analyzed recordings from all over the world, did anthropological field work among congregations of tongue-speakers in Mexico, and wrote a seminal book on the

[34] Arthur Green and Barry W. Holtz, ed. and trans., *Your Word is Fire: The Hasidic Masters on Contemplative Prayer* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1993).

[35] Bradford Keeney, *Shaking Medicine: The Healing Power of Ecstatic Movement* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2007).

subject.[36] In her article "Prognosis: New Religion?"[37] she makes some observations that are relevant to our understanding of what happened at Pentecost. She says that in examining the historical and anthropological record of revitalization movements and crisis cults there is a large-scale evolution of the new movement but there are also local outbursts. She identifies Pentecost as a local outburst within the broad movement of early Christianity. Local outbursts usually start from some shock. For the Apostolic Church congregation she observed in the Yucatan, it was the arrival of a new minister. From a quiet church where only two members occasionally spoke in tongues it became a church where twenty-five members, many new recruits, were speaking in tongues. There were visions, prolonged trances, new rituals, a surge of evangelization, and attempts at communal living. For the Christian disciples at Pentecost the shock would be the death of Jesus, the disappearance of his body, and the reports of his appearances. Local outbursts are characterized by innovation. In the case of Pentecost, it was the sudden appearance of speaking in tongues. Local outbursts validate a preexisting supernatural premise, if the group has such a premise. In the case of Pentecost, the premise was that God was pouring out his spirit on all flesh before the coming of the risen Jesus on the clouds of heaven. This coming of the spirit was predicted in Joel 2:28-32:

> I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
> Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
> your old men will dream dreams,
> your young men will see visions.
> Even on my servants, both men and women,
> I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

[36] *Speaking in Tongues: A Cross-Cultural Study of Glossolalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

[37] Felicitas Goodman, "Prognosis: New Religion?" in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving Zaretsky and Mark Leone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 244–54.

> I will show wonders in the heavens
> and on the earth,
> blood and fire and billows of smoke.
>
> The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood
> before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.
> And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be
> saved.

Dr. Goodman tells us that speaking in tongues occurs in a trance state.

> Observations show us that subjects uttering glossolalia behave in a non-ordinary way. They show somatic symptoms of considerable excitation: flushing, exaggerated salivation, tear flow, muscle tension resulting in extreme rigidity, also shivering, shaking, twitching to name only a few features. It is a widely held opinion…that the co-occurrence of glossolalia and this hyperarousal, or trance…is merely fortuitous. However, an analysis of the data from well over a hundred services observed and recorded by me shows unequivocally that the vocalization is intimately related to the trance. In fact, the only way one can account for the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic agreement in the intonation pattern and a number of phonetic peculiarities of glossolalia utterances is to assume that the glossolalia is an artifact of the physical parameters of this trance. In other words, the vocal apparatus is no longer within the domain of the cortical speech centers, but rather expresses processes on the level of the autonomic nervous system. … There is also apparently an interpretation of processes of the autonomic nervous system at the psychological level. In hyperarousal, for instance, as observations on glossolalia speakers reveal, the subject performs certain acts, such as speaking, motions, which he

> does not remember once the altered state dissolves. What he does remember are those perceptions which we might term as belonging to the inner space. He remembers that he was unable to control his own behavior… Since none of these effects seemed to be emanating from his own volition, he feels that he was being manipulated, possessed by some supernatural being or entity.[38]

We can assume then that the participants in the Pentecost experience were in this hyperaroused trance state.[39] The usual perception of trance is that it is a relaxed semi-somnolent state. Experiments show, however, that a person in a deep hypnotic trance can do things like ride a bicycle or give a lecture and still be in a deep trance. The fact that the Pentecostal participants were in a hyperaroused trance state is added evidence that they were already practicing trance in order to produce visionary ascension. As we saw above, people in Kundalini Yoga meditation trance can have spontaneous episodes of speaking in tongues. It is not too much of a leap to say that visionary trance ascension can also produce spontaneous episodes of speaking in tongues.

Reality is defined by group consensus. Goodman writes, "Experiences shared with a group tend to be stronger than those experienced alone. In fact, the data show that in trance this group effect is not only one of summation, but, borrowing a phrase from pharmacology, one of potentiation." [40] Trance is, in part, a state of heightened suggestibility. The fact that a large number of disciples with a high level of trance capacity were gathered in one place at Pentecost practicing trance ascension potentiated the spread of speaking in tongues throughout the highly suggestible group.

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[38] Goodman, "Prognosis: New Religion?" 246–47.

[39] Speaking in tongues can also be learned as a skill and performed without the hyperaroused trance state. See, for example, Nicholas P. Spanos, Wendy Cross, Mark Lepage, and Marjorie Coristine, "Glossolalia as Learned Behavior: An Experimental Demonstration" *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 95, no. 1 (1986): 21–23,

[40] Goodman, "Prognosis: New Religion?" 248.

So far, we have seen that Jesus was a mystic who brought a message of universal love and forgiveness. Love like the Father in Heaven in order to participate in the coming reign of God. The Gospel of Thomas is a book of unitive mysticism. It contains sayings of Jesus that show different aspects of mystical experience: Encounter with the light, making the two into one, and transcending the opposites. Current psychological research shows that people with high trance capacity can have experiences in profound trance the same as or very similar to mystical experiences. Jesus identified disciples with high trance capacity and made them apostles. He taught them to be copies of himself, to acquire the Holy Spirit during induced mystical experiences the way he did himself during his own mystical experience at the baptism by John. He then sent them out to exorcise, heal, and preach the coming kingdom. Evidence from Pentecost shows that the disciples had a method of visionary trance ascension based on Enoch's ascent to heaven in the Book of the Watchers.

Jesus' practice of visionary trance ascension

If the disciples used visionary trance ascension to ascend to heaven and they learned it from Jesus, then we can conclude that Jesus practiced visionary trance ascension. The light which we have seen reiterated over and over in the Gospel of Thomas is the light found at the end of the journey, the light of the Divine Glory, the Kavod, the Image of God on the throne.

> And I beheld and saw therein a lofty throne; and its appearance was like the crystals of ice and the wheels thereof were like the shining sun… And from underneath the throne came forth streams of blazing fire, and I was unable to look on it. And the glory of the Great One sat thereon, and his raiment was brighter than the sun, and whiter than any snow. And no angel was able to enter this

> house, or to look on his face, by reason of its splendor and glory; and no flesh was able to look on him (1 Enoch 14:18-21).

As we have seen, the book of the Similitudes of Enoch (1 Enoch 37-71) is now dated to the reign of Herod the Great, which makes it a pre-Christian Jewish document. If Jesus read it, he could have learned about Enoch's ascension, vision of the divine glory, transfiguration, and designation as the Son of Man. It could have become the pattern for his own mystical experience in the heaven world. Here is 1 Enoch 71:8-14 (Charles translation):

> And I saw angels who could not be counted,
> A thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand
> Encircling that house …
> And they came forth from that house,
> And Michael and Gabriel, Raphael and Phanuel,
> And many holy angels without number.
> And with them the Head of Days,
> His head white and pure as wool,
> And His raiment indescribable.
> And I fell on my face,
> And my whole body became relaxed,
> ["melted," Knibb translation, "weak with fear," Black translation]
> And my spirit was transfigured;
> And I cried with a loud voice,
> ...with the spirit of power,
> And blessed and glorified and extolled. …
> And he (i.e., the angel) came to me and greeted me with His voice, and said unto me:
> "This is the Son of Man who is born unto righteousness,
> And righteousness abides over him,

> And the righteousness of the Head of Days forsakes him not."

The book of 2 Enoch is generally dated to before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE.[41] How much before is not known. It could be pre-Christian. If Jesus was familiar with it, he could have read a description of Enoch's transfiguration there. Of course, he didn't need to read about it, since these ideas were circulating in the Judaism of his time.

> And the Lord said to Michael: Go and take Enoch from out (of) his earthly garments, and anoint him with my sweet ointment, and put him into the garments of My glory (2 Enoch 22:8. Morfill translation).

If Enoch is the Son of Man, how can Jesus also be the Son of Man?

Some scholars believe that the chapter where Enoch is proclaimed the Son of Man was added to the manuscript at a later date. If so, Jesus may not have known that Enoch was the Son of Man and hence he could claim the title for himself. Or it could be that both Jesus and Enoch were members of a corporate entity, the Son of Man.

We read in Paul, "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Rom 12:4-5). The Son of Man in Daniel can be seen as a similar corporate figure. In Dan. 7:14, the Son of Man is given authority, glory, and sovereign power. His dominion will be an everlasting dominion that will not pass away. In Daniel 7:18 we read, "But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever." T. W. Manson writes, "Just as the beasts stood for the pagan empire, so the Son of Man stands

[41] See Andrei Orlov, chap. 7, "Noachic Polemics and the Date of 2 Enoch," in *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

for Israel or the godly Remnant within Israel. In that case Son of Man in this period is a new name for what in earlier times was called the 'Remnant' or the 'Servant of Yaweh,' and later, as a result of the ministry of Jesus, appears as the Churchor the 'Body of Christ' or the 'Bride of Christ' or the 'New Israel.'"[42] Just as Enoch was transfigured and became (a member of) the Son of Man, so too was Jesus transfigured and became (a member of) the Son of Man. Gospel of Thomas 106 reads, "When you make the two one, you will become the sons of man, and when you say, 'Mountain, move away,' it will move away." Does this use of "sons of man" mean that they become members of the corporate Son of Man?

Are these ancient writings literary creations of the imagination or are they descriptions of the authors' own personal experience of visionary ascension? I would warn against labeling them as literary storytelling. The probability is that they are literary adaptations based on the actual practice of visionary trance ascension. The anthropologist Ericka Bourguignon was the director of a research project for the National Institute of Mental Health (1963–68) called "A Cross-Cultural Study of Dissociational States."[43] It looked at the ethnographic records for 488 societies around the world to see the extent of their use of dissociation, trance, and altered states of consciousness. In all, 90 percent of the societies are reported to use one or more institutionalized, culturally patterned forms of altered states of consciousness. These are categorized as Trance or Possession Trance. Trance involves visions, spirit journeys, channeling, and vision quests, among others. It is done in a quiescent state and content is usually well remembered. Possession Trance involves spirit possession during a trance state. It is active and dramatic. As a dissociated state similar to multiple personality, it is usually not remembered well. There is another category

42 T. W. Manson, "The Son of Man Problem and Daniel, Enoch and the Gospels," in *The Son of Man Problem: Critical Readings*, ed. Benjamin E. Reynolds (London: T&T Clark International, 2018), 325.

43 Erika Bourguignon, "A Cross-Cultural Study of Dissociational States," Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1968.

in the study called Possession. A culture defines a person's symptoms as a result of spirit possession, but there is no trance involved. For example, "When the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke" (Matt. 9:33). Hebrew society was found to have all three: Trance, Possession Trance, and Possession.[44] Because these things do not occur with any respect or any frequency in modern culture, we are often skeptical about their importance or even existence in another culture. We deal with literary creations every day, so we give more weight to the written word in interpreting what is going on in another culture and what was going on in the ancient world.

What evidence is there in the New Testament for visionary ascension?

Paul boasts about ascending to paradise in order to counter what appear to be "super-apostle" opponents who are boasting about their own ascensions to heaven. The majority of scholars believe that Paul is talking about himself in this passage:

> I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles." … And I will keep on doing what I am doing [boasting] in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. … I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was

44 Erika Bourguignon, ed., *Religion, Altered States of Consciousness, and Social Change* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1973), 366.

> caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell (2 Cor. 11:5–12:4).

The author of Revelation writes about his ascension to the heaven world:

> After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads (Rev 4:1–4).

The author of Hebrews writes as if Christians have already visited heaven:

> But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven (Heb. 12:22–23).

The transfiguration of Jesus suggests the transfiguration that we saw in 1 Enoch 71 and 2 Enoch 22:8.

> After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Two things indicate to me that this scene on a mountaintop is disguised. It really occurred in the heaven world, not on earth. There is an ascension. Jesus and the three disciples ascend a mountain and in Middle Eastern religions a mountain can often be considered a cosmic temple, the place where heaven and earth come together and one meets the gods. Moses is long dead and Elijah ascended into heaven while still alive, so heaven is where you would naturally meet them. If Elijah is John the Baptist, how does he also appear to Jesus during the transfiguration? Jesus probably told his inner circle about an ascension where he encountered Moses and Elijah and they turned it into a story about a vision seen by three disciples on a mountaintop.

The Gospel of John reports that while talking to Nicodemus Jesus claims he has ascended into heaven. Note that this is in the context of Spirit baptism.

> Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. … If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

Only Jesus has ascended into heaven? Already in John's branch of early Christianity by the time of the gospel given his name, visionary trance ascensions have died out. Christianity's success caused

this failure. The original core of disciples around Jesus were hypnotic virtuosi, but only a few of the new converts had a high trance capacity. Visionary trance ascension was a secret method of the inner circle. When it didn't work well with the new recruits, it was dropped for them. Certain talented students would have been taught the method, however.

Charles Quarles is very skeptical about Jesus as a *Merkabah* mystic, believing that there is little evidence for the actual practice of *Merkabah* ascension at the time of Jesus.[45] Unfortunately, he does not review any of the above evidence from early Christianity. He does give evidence from Colossians, however. "Paul's descriptions of the Colossian error share many correspondences with Jewish mysticism and particularly, with descriptions of the ascent to the chariot throne. In light of these parallels, several scholars have suggested that the Colossian error was influenced by a form of Jewish mysticism with tendencies of the later *merkabah* movement." Citing April DeConick's *Seek to See Him*, he suggests that the Gospel of Thomas may provide promising evidence of early connections between Jesus' teaching and Merkabah mysticism.

Jesus' mystical experience at his baptism

How did Jesus acquire the Spirit and then pass it on during baptism? At his own baptism he would have confessed his sins like all the others who were baptized by John. Newly purified, after immersion he had a mystical experience. "When he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove." This experience would have taken a long time, so it probably occurred while he was drying off on the riverbank. There are two parts here, the heavens being opened and the coming of the Spirit like a dove. The heavens being opened is shorthand for an ascension into

45 Charles Quarles, "Jesus as Merkabah Mystic," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 3, no. 1 (2005): 5–22.

heaven. John of Patmos writes, "There before me was a door standing open in heaven." During his ascension Jesus would have seen the heavenly temple, the Chariot Throne with its holy living creatures, the radiant Divine Glory, and God as a figure like a man coming toward him (1 Enoch 71:9-10). He would have been transfigured by being clothed in a garment of glory and named Son of Man. Before, we looked at three cases of people who merged with the divine light as Jesus did during this ascension when he was wrapped in a garment of glory. Richard Bucke says that through the experience he came to realize "that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love." Sophy Burnham writes, "I rode in a wild and joyous state, knowing that all creation is perfect and is most perfectly composed of love." Ronald Havens writes of his hypnotic subject Helen, "She felt herself merge with the warm energy of that light, and then she 'knew' that the light was everything around her, a vast unity of loving energy that is everything and everyone." Jesus acquired his understanding of divine love during this experience.

The other part of the experience was the Spirit descending on him like a dove. It was during a vision of God's Glory that Ezekiel was given the Spirit, so there is precedent for the coming of the Spirit during such a vision.

> The hand of the LORD was on me there, and he said to me, "Get up and go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you." So I got up and went out to the plain. And the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. Then the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet. … [God] spoke to me and said: "… I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent and unable to rebuke them, for they are a rebellious people. But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you shall say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says.' Whoever will listen let

> them listen, and whoever will refuse let them refuse; for they are a rebellious people (Ezek. 3:22-27).

The Spirit is part of Jesus' prophetic mission of warning the people of Israel that the reign of God is very near. They must become more loving and more forgiving if they want to be saved from the coming judgment. "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear" is very similar to "Whoever will listen let them listen, and whoever will refuse let them refuse; for they are a rebellious people."

But why does the Spirit descend like a dove? In Genesis 1:2, "The earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." This suggests a bird hovering, but it is not a dove. In Genesis 8:9, "The dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark." Here the bird hovering over the waters actually is a dove, but the two stories are not related at all. There is no good reason why the dove in the Noah narrative should be identified with the Spirit. In Leviticus doves are specified as sin and burnt offering sacrifices, but there is no connection with the Spirit. All the other references to doves in the Old Testament are innocuous and again have no connection with the Spirit.

Jesus makes one other reference to doves. When he sends out the twelve, he says, "Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matt. 10:16, Gospel of Thomas 39). This is a Goddess blessing. Doves were sacred to Ishtar, Aphrodite, Venus, and Athena, the goddess of wisdom.[46] Snakes were also sacred to Athena. Merlin Stone writes, "[Athena's] serpent continually appeared in legend, drawings, and sculptures. In some statues it peered out from beneath Her great bronze shield or stood by Her side. A special building known as

46 Hope B. Werness, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Animal Symbolism in Art* (New York: Continuum Press, 2004), 143.

the Erechtheum stood on the Acropolis alongside her temple, the Parthenon. The Erechtheum was considered to be the home of Athena's snake."[47] Snakes were wise because they were associated with prophecy. At Delphi a priestess sat on a three-legged stool when she gave the prophetic oracles. Coiled about the stool was a snake called Python. Cassandra, the Trojan prophetess cursed so that no one would believe her, got her powers because the sacred snakes at Delphi licked her ears when she was a baby.

My own belief is that snakes, because of their ability to slither, ripple, and coil, stand symbolically halfway between the formless and form. They are dangerous, formless, and move in waves and hence they are associated with the original chaos of formless water. In ancient Babylon, Tiamat, the goddess of the primordial salt sea, was depicted as a snake among other images. In the Bible the ocean monster Leviathan is a sea serpent: "Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent" (Is. 27:1). Leviathan derives from the Ugaritic sea monster Lotan, whose name means "coiled" and who was called "the fugitive serpent." Just beginning to solidify, snakes can indicate the future because the future itself is dangerous and formless and is only just beginning to solidify. Because snakes are halfway between the formless and form, they are symbolically associated with women, who bring babies out of the formless water of their wombs. In Egyptian hieroglyphics, the cobra is the symbol for the word "goddess." Every goddess name was preceded by the cobra symbol. One goddess, Wadjet, was an ancient cobra goddess in the Nile delta of Egypt. Her job was to protect Egypt and the cosmos from chaos. I believe that the reared cobra head represents the triumph of form over the formless, symbolized by the body of the snake. The reared cobra head is seen as the Uraeus, part of every

47 Merlin Stone, *When God Was a Woman* (New York: Dial Press, 1976), 202. Most of the snake lore in this section comes from Merlin Stone's book. See the index for serpent myths. The interpretation of the meaning of snake symbolism as halfway between formlessness and form is my own, however.

pharaoh's crown. The island of Crete is famous for figurines of a goddess and her priestesses holding snakes and there is some evidence that this part of Cretan religion derived from the Wadjet cobra of Egypt. The Mycenean civilization of Crete may be the source for Athena's companion snake, since some Mycenean foundations have been found on the Acropolis. Ishtar, goddess of love and war, whose sacred bird was the dove, is depicted at times with two snakes curled around her scepter.

Given the association of snakes and doves with female deities of wisdom and love, when Jesus says, "Be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves," he is likely thinking of a female wisdom figure. When he says that the Spirit descended on him like a dove, he is likely thinking of the Wisdom tradition in Judaism, where Wisdom is identified as the Spirit of God. The dove is sacred to Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and also to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. His message to the world was that people had to learn to love in a deep and universal way. The dove at his baptism then would symbolize the Spirit of God as both Wisdom and Love. For three hundred years, since Alexander the Great's conquest, Palestine was drenched in Hellenistic culture. Surly Jesus was aware that the dove was sacred to both Athena and Aphrodite.

The Wisdom of Solomon states (7:25-39):

> For she is a breath of the power of God,
> and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty;
> therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.
> For she is a reflection of eternal light,
> a spotless mirror of the working of God,
> and an image of his goodness.
> Though she is but one, she can do all things,

and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
in every generation she passes into holy souls
and makes them friends of God, and prophets;
for God loves nothing so much as the man who lives with wisdom.
For she is more beautiful than the sun,
and excels every constellation of the stars.
Compared with the light she is found to be superior,
for it is succeeded by the night,
but against wisdom evil does not prevail (NRSV).

"A breath of the power of God … she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets." This is a description of the Holy Spirit. George Montague writes in his book *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition*, "[The author of *Wisdom of Solomon*] depicts the whole of sacred history as the work of God's wisdom, and he does not hesitate to personify this attribute in most daring ways, one of which is to identify wisdom with the spirit of God."[48] The passage above identifies her with divine light, as well.

Jesus is not like the prophets of old. He never says, "Thus says the Lord." Montague writes about Wisdom in Proverbs: "She is not presented as a messenger with an oracle beginning, 'Thus says the Lord.' Rather, she speaks by herself, on her own authority, like a goddess."[49] "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes" (Matt. 7:28-29). Does his authority come from the fact that Jesus has received as the Holy Spirit the female aspect of God called Wisdom? Jesus is often considered a wisdom teacher because of his sapiential style.

[48] New York: Paulist Press, 1976, 100.

[49] Ibid., 94.

R. P. Nettelhorst is a teacher of biblical languages. He writes:

> In Aramaic (and hence in the dialect known as Syriac) the natural gender of the word "spirit" was feminine; however, I was surprised to discover that this accident of grammar had resulted in a whole theology constructed around the femininity of the third person of the Godhead [in Syriac Christianity]. … While the word [spirit] is exclusively feminine in Aramaic, in Hebrew it is sometimes masculine. … Much to my surprise, every occurrence of "Spirit of Yahweh" in Judges is feminine. As I pondered that, I recalled Genesis 1:2, the first occurrence of "Spirit of God" in the Bible and realized to my shock that it too is feminine. Back to the concordance. Out of 84 OT uses of the word "spirit," in contexts traditionally assumed to be references to the Holy Spirit, 75 times it is either explicitly feminine or indeterminable (due to lack of a verb or adjective). Only nine times can "spirit" be construed as masculine, and in those cases it is unclear that it is a reference to God's Holy Spirit anyway.[50]

If Jesus was transfigured during a trance ascension and named Son of Man, it makes sense that Wisdom was given to him as the Holy Spirit, because the Son of Man was associated with Wisdom in the Similitudes. John J. Collins writes, "It would seem that Parables here developed the identity of the Son of Man well beyond anything that we found in Daniel, by applying to him language that is elsewhere used of wisdom."[51]

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[50] More Than Just a Controversy: All About the Holy Spirit," *Quartz Hill Journal of Theology* 3, no. 1, http://www.theology.edu/journal/volume3/spirit.htm.

[51] This is a quote from the section on Wisdom in James Waddell, *The Messiah: A Comparative Study of the Enochic Son of Man and the Pauline Kyrios* (London: T&T Clark International, 2011), 67. It is quoted from John J. Collins, "Enoch and the Son of Man: A Response to Sabino Chialà and Helge Kvanvig," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), 225.

Jesus as the Image of God

We learn in Colossians 1:15 that, "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." The idea of the image of God goes back to Genesis 1:27. "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." Ezekiel sees the image of God in his vision of the chariot and the four holy living creatures. "Above the vault over their heads was what looked like a throne of lapis lazuli, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man" (Ezek. 1:26). The image looks like glowing metal and fire, "and brilliant light surrounded him. Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD" (Ezek. 1:26-28).

Previously I left out a piece of Logion 22. Here it is with that piece restored:

> Jesus said to them, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female; and when you fashion [an eye] in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness; then will you enter the kingdom."

When Jesus was transfigured by God to become the Son of Man in his baptismal trance ascension, he was robed in a garment of glory. Jesus became a smaller image of God, a human figure surrounded by the divine glory. He then merged in possession trance with the Body of God so that he felt his whole body transformed into the Divine Image. We know from the Gospel of Thomas quote above that the disciples were urged in their visionary trance ascensions,

after their union with the light of glory and transcendence of the opposites, to also merge with the image of the Body of God, to fashion an eye in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness, so that they too could become the radiant image of God. How do we know that the "likeness in place of a likeness" is the image of God and not some other image? The preceding clauses give us the clue: "When you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female …" Genesis 1:26 says, "In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." So, the image of God is generic, it transcends male and female and can be either. Since male and female are being transcended, the image (the likeness in place of a likeness) being put on is the image of God from Genesis 1. Jarl Fossum writes about 1 Enoch:

> There is no doubt that the Son of Man, who is seated upon a heavenly throne which can be identified as God's own throne, is the Glory, for he is introduced in the book as a being "whose countenance had the appearance of a man" (xlvi.1), a phrase which clearly alludes to Ez. 1.26.
> [Note 60 – identified as God's own throne] According to li.3, the Elect One will sit on God's throne at the end of times (another reading, however, identifies the throne as that of the Elect One himself). In lxi.8, it is said that God will place the Elect One on the "throne of glory" and lxii.2 says that God sat down on the "throne of glory." In view of lxi.8, however, the last passage would make better sense if it is taken to say that God placed "him," i.e., the Elect One, on the throne of glory.[52]

[52] Jarl E. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origins of Gnosticism* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr, 1985), 279. For a more extensive discussion of Christ and the Son of Man as the Kavod, the Glory and Image of God, see Jarl E. Fossum, "Jewish-Christian Christology and Jewish Mysticism," *Vigiliae Christianae* 37, no. 3 (September 1983): 260–87. For the Son of Man on the throne of God see also Gieschen,

The third-century Syriac *Acts of Thomas* contains *The Hymn of the Pearl*, dating back to the second century. When the boy who is the hero of the hymn remembers that he is the son of the king of kings, he puts the sea serpent to sleep with divine enchantments, retrieves the mystic pearl, and begins to return to his father and mother in the heaven world. Before he arrives and becomes a ruler with his parents and his brother, he is clothed in a garment of glory.

> on a sudden, when I received it,
> the garment seemed to me to become like a mirror of myself. …
> my decorated robe, which
> was adorned with glorious colors,
> with gold and beryls
> and rubies and agates
> and sardonyxes, varied in color.
> And it was skillfully worked in its home on high …
> and the image of the king of kings
> was embroidered and depicted in full all over it,
> and I stretched forth and took it.
> With the beauty of its colors I adorned myself …[53]

The garment of glory he puts on is a representation of the Kavod, the glorious light of rainbow colors (Ezek. 1:28) which contains the image of God, the king of kings.

This same theme can be seen in 2 Cor. 3:7-18

> The Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory … We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face … only in Christ is it taken away … Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces,

"Importance of the Parables of *1 Enoch*," section 1.3.

[53] William Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1871), 238-245.

> seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror,
> are being transformed into the same image from one degree
> of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.[54]

Again we can see this as a reference to the Kavod. There is a transformation into the image and the glory.

The hymn in Philippians 2 begins by saying that Jesus was in the form of God, but he humbled himself to become a man and to become obedient to death, even death on a cross.

> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
> and gave him the name that is above every name,
> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
> in heaven and on earth and under the earth (Phil. 2:9-10).

Since Jesus was given his name at birth, God must have given him some other name. Since it is the name above every name, it is very likely the name "Yahweh" itself. I have no evidence, but I suspect that there is a pictographic connection between the name Yahweh and the image of God. If you write Yahweh vertically instead of horizontally, you see the image of a person. Yod is the head, Heh is the arms, Vav is the trunk, and final Heh is the legs. In Philippians Jesus receives the name above every name in the context of his resurrection. I suspect that it actually occurred during his baptismal mystical experience. When he ascended, he was wrapped in divine glory, specified the Son of Man, merged with the image of God, and given the name above every name. Merging with the image of God may have been the outward sign of his *unio mystica*, his union with the Absolute.[55]

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[54] Verses 17 and 18 are from the NRSV. The previous verses are from the NIV. Note that there is a reference to a mirror in both *The Hymn of the Pearl* and 2 Cor. 3:18.

[55] See Gieschen, "Importance of the Parables of *1 Enoch*," section 1.5, where he argues that the Son of Man was given the Divine Name in the primal time before creation.

The origin of Jesus' ascension technique

Where did Jesus learn to do visionary trance ascensions? Bruce Chilton, in his wonderful reconstruction of the life of Jesus, portrays him as a disciple of John the Baptist,[56] much as Josephus was a disciple of the spiritual master Banus in the Judean desert. This makes sense to me. In the gospels Jesus arrives, is baptized, receives the spirit, and then is driven into the wilderness all in one day, so his relationship with John consists of a very casual contact. But we know that the teachings of John had a tremendous impact on Jesus. He was very probably one of John's disciples for a time, something the gospel writers would have been loath to admit. In Chilton's narrative it was John who taught Jesus *Ma'aseh Merkabah*, the work of the Chariot, which included deep meditation on Ezekiel's vision of the Chariot Throne. This is a good guess, but I would like to point out four other places where Jesus might have learned the work of the Chariot.

He could have learned it at home with his family. His father dreamed prophetic dreams and his mother communicated with angels. They might have been the descendants of a prophetic guild, still carrying on its traditions. There certainly was some spiritual training going on in their household. To produce one spiritual master is an anomaly, to produce two spiritual masters, both Jesus and his brother James the Just, denotes training.

He might have learned visionary ascension on the road as an itinerant exorcist. I assume that this was his profession before he came into contact with John the Baptist.[57] He would have met other exorcists who

[56] Bruce Chilton, "The *Talmid* of John," in *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2000).

[57] Acts 19:3, "Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits" (NKJV). Small villages did not have any kind of doctor so itinerant exorcists would go around to them to heal and cast out demons. There are hints in the Gospels that Jesus knew specific procedures for exorcisms, such as spitting on the tongue or the eyes (Mark 7:33; 8:23) and prayer and fasting (Mark 9:29). Since Jesus was itinerant and an exorcist,

were steeped in procedures taken from magical papyri. In his book *Jesus the Magician*, Morton Smith has painted a portrait of Jesus as this kind of exorcist. As we remarked earlier, Morton Smith notes that there are references in the magical papyri to a magician's boy assistant. This assistant is put in a trance and then made to see the gods. Perhaps this happened to Jesus himself in his teens. An itinerant exorcist magician hypnotized him and used him as a seer to communicate with angelic forces dwelling in the heaven world.

The Self-Glorification hymn indicates that there may have been a practice of visionary ascension at Qumran. If Jesus spent time at Qumran, he may have learned the technique there.

There were miracle-working holy men around the time of Jesus who called God Abba, Father. Jesus was a miracle-working holy man who called God Abba, Father. Is there any evidence that these holy men practiced visionary ascension? They were noted for being able to control the rain as was Jesus (he calms a furious storm in Mark 4:35-41, Matt. 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25). The Talmud tells a story of a great drought where Rabbi Akiba offers prayers and rain immediately falls (Ta'anit 25b). Was Rabbi Akiba originally a holy man who called God Abba before he began his rabbinic studies in his forties? In the story of the Four Who Entered Paradise, Rabbi Akiba was the only one who survived his Merkabah ascension and returned in peace. He was also a prominent protagonist in the Hekhalot literature, a master of Merkabah ascension. Another of these holy men, Hanina ben Dosa, was bitten by a snake while he was in a trance state practicing concentration of the heart and did not even feel the bite. Rabbi Akiba was flayed alive for his participation in the bar Kokhba revolt but is said to have continued his prayers and was asked if he was a sorcerer because he felt no pain. Unfortunately, all of these stories may be

this was probably his profession before his mystical experience with John.

legends with no basis in fact, so we have to be skeptical about the practice of ascension among first-century charismatic holy men.

A reinterpretation of Gnosticism is needed

In the early days of Christianity the solid food given to the mature in Christ (1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14) was the practice of visionary trance ascension to view the glory of God and to unify with the divine light and the holy image. By receiving the feminine Holy Spirit of wisdom and love, one went beyond the opposites, made the two into one, becoming neither male nor female. In a mystical experience you were made one with the mind and power of God.[58]

At some point we have to reinterpret gnostic doctrines to see how much could have been taken from this hidden side of early Christianity. Did Barbēlō emerge from the feminine Holy Spirit of wisdom and love? Was the bridechamber a ritual of marriage with Sophia/Wisdom/Spirit? Was ascension through the planets to unify with the divine Light an elaboration on Christian visionary trance ascension? Gnostics believed that there was a divine spark in people that needed to be redeemed so that it could join again with the good God that existed above and beyond this world of demiurge and demons. Did they have the courage to reject this world because they experienced the bliss and beauty of the beyond through Christian visionary trance ascension?[59]

[58] In Gospel of Thomas 114 Jesus says of Mary (Magdalen?), "I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven." Here he is either saying that she will need to unite with the male side of God to become a living spirit or that she first needs to become male to unite with the female Holy Spirit in order to become a living spirit. Possibly he is saying that since he is the divine glory and image of God, he himself will unite with her in order to make her male/female and hence a living spirit.

[59] Fossum, "Jewish-Christian Christology and Jewish Mysticism," is a useful source in uncovering trajectories from the hidden wisdom to gnostic outcomes.

Summary of the ascension narrative

Here is an overview of the hypnotic script for a visionary ascension. In deep trance the disciple experiences the following:

- He is lifted up by winds to heaven and passes through tongues of fire.
- Encounters the fire and ice of the heavenly temple.
- Falls to the ground in awe and terror.
- Looks into the inner part of the heavenly temple.
- Sees the myriads of angels.
- Sees the Kavod, the Glory and Image of God.
- He is wrapped in divine Glory and merged with the divine Image.
- Realizing that the divine mind is beyond the opposites,
- He receives Wisdom, the feminine Spirit of God, and understands that as a divine being, he is neither male nor female.
- He is specified a member of the Son of Man and given the name above every name.
- As a divine being, he/she reigns over the All.

The grand experiment

Now that I have sketched out the visionary trance ascension narrative that I think Jesus used to induce mystical experiences in the inner circle of his followers, we can conduct a grand psychological experiment to see if Jesus' method can produce early Christian mystical experience here in the twenty-first century. We test a population of Christian ministers and monks for high trance capacity using the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, form C, or the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility. Those

who score very high become our experimental group. An equal number of those who score in the bottom quarter become our control group. We train the subjects for at least eight nonconsecutive hours in hypnotic trance work using guided imagery techniques. Then, in an individual session, we guide a subject into profound trance and go through Jesus' narrative of ascension and transfiguration. After the session, the subject is tested to see if he or she has had a mystical experience using Hood's Mysticism scale and the MEQ (mystical experience questionnaire) scale. These are well respected questionnaire scales used in religious experience research.

They have the following subscales.

1. **Internal Unity** – pure awareness beyond sense impressions, a merging with ultimate reality
2. **External Unity** – unity of all things, all things are alive, all is one
3. **Transcendence of Time and Space**
4. **Ineffability and Paradoxicality** – the experience is impossible to describe in words
5. **Sense of Sacredness** – awe, intrinsic holiness
6. **Noetic Quality** – feeling of intuitive knowledge of the truth about ultimate reality
7. **Deeply Felt Positive Moo**d – joy, peace, love, bliss
8. **Ego Loss** – losing oneself into a greater unity
9. **Inner Subjectivity** – perception of an inner awareness in all things

If through experiment we can refine our work to create a trance method that produces mystical experience, we can make the method available to schools of theology to help train new ministers and to interested lay people who would like to deepen their spiritual lives.

Historical Background for Jesus the Mystic

Instead of BC and AD, dates are given in the form used by scholars: BCE is Before the Common Era and CE is the Common Era. They mean the same thing as BC and AD but without the reference to Christ.

King Solomon constructed the First Temple in Jerusalem around 960 BCE. The building itself was a huge chamber with a room in it called the Holy of Holies which housed the Ark of the Covenant. Within the Ark of the Covenant were the tablets Moses brought down from Mount Sinai. The Ark was a portable wooden box with statues of two angels on its cover. God was said to have spoken with Moses from the mercy seat, which was between the two cherubim on the Ark's cover. Roughly 400 years later, under Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonians destroyed the First Temple (586 BCE). Over the course of several years, inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem were exiled to Babylon. While in Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of God on his chariot throne. He saw a "likeness as the appearance of a man" seated on the throne. There was brightness round about him. The lower part of his body was fire and the upper part was like gleaming bronze. A brilliant light, the glory of the Lord, surrounded him. It looked like a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day. In Ezekiel's vision God's throne was a chariot. It was similar to the Ark of the Covenant in that it could travel. It was supported by angels and had wheels within wheels that allowed it to move in any direction. God on his chariot throne could move anywhere, including going to Babylon with its Jewish exiles.

About fifty years later the Persian king Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon (539 BCE) and the exiled Judeans were allowed to return home, where they constructed a Second Temple in Jerusalem. Two hundred years later (332 BCE) Alexander the Great conquered Judea along with much of the rest of the known world. When Alex-

ander died ten years later, his empire was divided among his generals. Judea was ruled by the general who took over Egypt. However, it was annexed in 198 BCE by the Seleucid empire, ruled by the descendants of another of Alexander's generals. This proved to be a disaster for Judaism. The Seleucid king sold the high priesthood to the highest bidder and later looted the Temple. He banned the practice of the Jewish religion and reconsecrated the Temple to the cult of Olympian Zeus. This "abomination of desolation" lasted for three years from 167 to 164 BCE. The outrage sparked a revolution against the Seleucids which brought back religious liberty and, after twenty years of fighting, complete independence.

The Book of Daniel was written sometime around the three years of the abomination, but it was set in the time of the Babylonian Captivity. Daniel, its hero, was a young man taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. The king has a dream and only Daniel is able to interpret it correctly. He is placed above all the wise men of Babylon and he and his friends are given high positions. His friends, however, refuse to bow to a golden statue of the king and are thrown into a fiery furnace. They are miraculously unburnt, and the king honors them. The nobles of the kingdom blasphemously drink from vessels stolen from the Jerusalem Temple and a hand appears and writes on the wall. Daniel interprets it to mean that the kingdom will be taken by the Medes and the Persians. When the Persians actually do take over, Daniel is thrown into a den of lions for worshipping his Jewish God, but he emerges unhurt and his accusers are thrown in instead. Toward the end of the book Daniel has a prophetic dream of four beasts coming up out of the sea. They represent four successive kingdoms. An angel tells Daniel that in the end the "holy ones of the Most High" will receive an everlasting kingdom. Daniel sees God as the Ancient of Days seated on his throne. God judges the last of the four kingdoms and destroys it. Now "one like a son of man" – a human being, not a beast – comes on the clouds to the Ancient of Days and he is given everlasting kingship over the entire world.

About a hundred years later after the Seleucid empire has been defeated, in 63 BCE, the Roman general Pompey conquers the Jewish independent state and Palestine falls under Roman dominion. The Second Temple, built after the end of the Babylonian captivity, lasts until 70 CE when the Romans destroy it during a revolt against their rule.

The Origins of Jewish Mysticism. In my opinion these are the phases in the development of Jewish mysticism:

The Prophets and the prophetic schools of the Old Testament	**1200 BCE - 300BCE**
The Self-Glorification Hymn and the Ascent Apocalypses	**300 BCE - 70 CE**
Jewish Christianity	**1 to 200 CE**
Rabbinic references - The Mishna and Tosefta	**1 to 200 CE**
Merkabah Mysticism	**300 to 1100 CE**
The Kabbalah	**1100 CE and later**

.....

The Merkabah is the name for the chariot throne of God in Hebrew. Jewish Merkabah mysticism (300 to 1100 CE) has to do with vol-untary techniques of visionary trance ascension through the seven heavens and the seven palaces of the heavenly temple to see the glory of God on the chariot throne. There are several books that teach Merkabah ascension techniques that date to the 600s-plus CE. Some of the materials in these books date back to earlier times. There are also references to it in the rabbinic literature that date to the late one-hundreds CE. The real question is: how far back do these techniques go? The Enoch literature, dating from 300 BCE to 70 CE, has accounts of ascension. (See the detailed summaries of the Enoch literature at the end of this section.) Were these literary creations or did people actually make voluntary trance ascensions to see the glory of God around the time of Jesus? Scholars are split on this issue.

There are a number of references in the Old Testament to people seeing the Divine Glory. In Exodus 24:9–10, Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel see the God of Israel. Under his feet is something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. The prophet Micah (active around 737–694 BCE) says, "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left (1 Kings 22:19)." Around 592 BCE the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of God on his chariot throne. He saw a "likeness as the appearance of a man" seated on the throne. A brilliant light, the glory of the Lord, surrounded the throne.

These examples do not involve techniques of voluntary trance ascension; they are visions given to people on the earth. Isaiah 6 is more interesting because it implies that Isaiah is actually in heaven. "In the year that King Uzziah died [739 BCE], I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.' … Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, 'See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.'" (NIV) But even here there is no evidence that Isaiah reached heaven using a voluntary technique of visionary trance ascension. He could have been called up to the throne by God himself.

In my own view it is naïve to think of these examples just as visions granted by God. The prophetic schools in ancient Israel would have had methods for reaching altered states of consciousness that would facilitate prophecy, just as later mystics used prayer, fasting, night

vigils, mortification of the body, scriptural meditation, contemplative practices, and chanting.

One technique the later Jewish Merkabah mystics used was to place one's head between the knees in the position that Elijah used on Mount Carmel until all the faculties were nullified. Then they recited songs of praise to the Holy One, songs that were supposed to be the songs that the angels sing. This would lift them up in their visionary ascension to the world of the angels and the divine glory. Compare this to what the prophet Samuel said to Saul: "As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying." (1 Sam. 10:5) We read in 1 Chronicles, "David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals." (1 Chron. 25:1) Also, 2 Kings 3:15–16 tells us, "While the harpist was playing, the hand of the Lord came upon Elisha and he said, 'This is what the Lord says …'" It is obvious from these examples that the ancient prophets used musical techniques to reach the prophetic state of consciousness. In this state some of them would have visions of the divine throne and the glory of God. This is very close to what the later Merkabah mystics did in singing angelic songs to induce visionary trance. One is a musical induction of a trance done in a group; the other is a musical induction of a trance done by an individual. They are both visionary trance techniques used to see the divine Glory. What is missing from the prophetic schools is any mention of ascension.

In the Book of the Watchers (200 to 300 BCE) there is an ascension but no transfiguration into an angelic being by the divine glory. The Aramaic portion of the Testament of Levi (before the middle of the second century BCE) also has an ascension but no transfiguration,

although after he sees God, Levi's clothing is changed and he is robed as a priest.

Because the members of the Dead Sea community felt that they were already saved, they saw themselves in liturgical communion with the angels. When they sang their thanksgiving hymns, they envisioned themselves as standing with the angels. In the Self-Glorification Hymn, which dates from 50 to 20 BCE, the human author has taken a mighty throne among the angels. Who is like me among the angels, he brags. Not only has he ascended into heaven, but he has been transformed into a particularly glorious angel.

In The Similitudes of Enoch (37 to 4 BCE) we see both ascension and glorification into an angel. This is also true of 2 Enoch, which is prior to 70 CE

This current paper shows that Jesus made voluntary trance ascensions to the heaven world to see the divine glory and that he was transfigured into a divine being there. Other ascension evidence in early Christianity includes Paul's trip to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12), Revelation (about 96 CE), and The Ascension of Isaiah (early second century CE).

Jesus chose his disciples for their trance capacity. He taught them the technique of trance ascension to see the glory, but the secret disappeared with the influx of new recruits to Christianity who did not have the same ability for trance work. Some trance ascension continued in Gnostic Christianity but died out when Gnosticism was suppressed as heresy.

There are minor references to Merkabah mysticism in the Jewish Mishna and Tosefta, which date to the first two hundred years CE. If voluntary trance ascensions to see the glory were being

practiced in Judaism at that time, we only get a few hints. Later, circa 600 CE, manuscripts on the visionary trance ascensions of Merkabah mysti-cism begin to appear. Later still, around 1100 CE, the period of Kabballah mysticism begins.

The Gospel of Thomas. The manuscript of the Gospel of Thomas is part of a cache of documents found in 1945 near the town of Nag Hammadi in southern Egypt. It was probably Christian monks who used the caves in a nearby cliff face or occupied a nearby monastery who buried the manuscripts sometime around 400 CE. Since most of the manuscripts were heretical sacred writings, they were probably buried for protection when orthodox Christianity began to destroy similar texts. The Gospel of Thomas is not like the other manuscripts, however. It is a sayings gospel: a set of 114 sayings of Jesus. About half of the sayings are familiar from the four gospels in the New Testament, but the other half are unknown sayings of Jesus. If they do indeed come from Jesus, they represent an incredible expansion of our knowledge of his teachings. Today there are several translations of Thomas available, but the unknown sayings are still very mysterious. Jesus spoke them in Aramaic. Later they were translated into Greek and still later they were translated into Coptic, the language used by Egyptian Christianity. Finally, they were translated into English. There is evidence, too, that Thomas was edited, perhaps several times, introducing who-knows-what changes to the text. The 114 sayings in the Gospel of Thomas are disconnected. They don't seem to follow one another in any logical order, so the sayings lack a context to give them meaning. Further, they are meant to be cryptic. The beginning of Thomas presents them as a mystery: "These are the secret words that the living Jesus spoke, and which Didymos Judas Thomas wrote down. And he said: 'whoever finds the meaning of these sayings will not experience death.'" The Gospel of Thomas follows the teaching methods of Jesus, who spoke in parables and called on his audience to think deeply about what he said with

the phrase, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Thomas is a challenge to open our intuition to spiritual meaning rather than a forthright presentation of factual data. There is no authoritative dating for the Gospel of Thomas, but some scholars have put its date of composition around 50 to 70 CE, which, if true, means that it was written before the gospels in the New Testament. Mark, the first of the four New Testament gospels, was probably written around 70 CE.

We are now going to explore in detail two books: 1 Enoch and 2 Enoch. They were not part of the Old Testament, but they were very important to religious thinking around the time of Jesus. These book summaries are long and involved so you might want to skip them.

The Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch chapters 1–36) was written sometime between 200 and 300 BCE. In the Book of Genesis, Enoch was the father of Methuselah and the great-grandfather of Noah. At the end of his life Enoch did not die; he ascended into heaven to be with God (Gen. 5:4). In another chapter of Genesis, we are told that "the sons of god" (angels) saw that the daughters of men were good. They took them as wives, and they bore children called Nephilim (giants). The Book of the Watchers uses these facts from Genesis about Enoch and the angels to tell a story.

A band of two hundred angels, called Watchers, are attracted by the beauty of the daughters of men. They lust after them and talk about descending to the earth to take wives. Semhazah, their leader, says that he will do it, but he is afraid that everyone else will chicken out and he is the only one who will commit the great sin. They all swear to do it together and the whole band descends to the earth. There they take wives and begin to teach human beings the secrets of heaven: sorcery and spells, metalworking, and the making of weapons. They spread iniquity everywhere. When their wives become pregnant, their children grow into lawless giants, who begin to attack the birds

and the beasts, devour all the available food, and slay human beings until there are only a few left alive. As they die, people pray to heaven: "Bring our cause before the Most High, and our destruction before the glory of the Great One." Four archangels hear and go in before the Presence. They tell the Holy One how a band of angels has descended to earth and defiled themselves with women, how they have spread guile and sin over the land, and how their children, the giants, have spilled much blood on the earth.

The Lord God, who knows it all already, sends a messenger to Noah to tell him that a great deluge is coming to wipe the earth clean. He sends his archangels to bind the evil angels for seventy generations until the day of judgement. The archangels are also to set the giants one against the other until they are destroyed. When the day of judgement is fulfilled, the whole earth will be freed from defilement, and peace and righteousness will reign for all eternity. The Most High sends Enoch, the great-grandfather of Noah, to the evil angels to tell them about the severity of their punishment. When they are told, fear and trembling seize them. They beg Enoch to draw up a petition for their forgiveness and present it to the Lord of heaven.

As Enoch ponders the petition he has written for them, he falls asleep and has a vision. In his vision he ascends into heaven and sees a lofty throne there. The glory of the Great One sits on the throne and his raiment is brighter than the sun. God commands Enoch to go back to the evil angels and tell them that they shall have no peace. They were immortal spirits, but they debased themselves to take wives and live as humans. They have brought iniquity to humankind by teaching them the secrets of heaven. Their children, the giants, have devastated the earth. When the giants are destroyed, evil spirits will come from their bodies. These evil spirits will live on the earth and attack human beings until the end of the world. For these reasons the evil angels will be bound until the day of the great judgement itself.

After this, in his vision, good angels take Enoch on a tour of all the secret places in the heavens and on the earth. One of the things he sees is a dreadful place, "a great fire there burning and blazing, and that place had an opening (reaching down) right to the abyss, filled with great columns of fire descending." Then the angel Uriel tells him, "This place is the prison of the angels: here they will be imprisoned for an eternity [on the day of the great judgement]."

The Similitudes of Enoch (also called The Parables of Enoch) (1 Enoch chapters 37–71) was probably written sometime during the reign of Herod the Great (37 BCE to 4 BCE). It is hard to summarize because it does not tell a story. It's all about the final judgement and the separation of the righteous from sinners. Enoch has a vision. It is divided into three parts, but they are pretty much the same.

Sinners will be judged for their sins. God's Righteous One, the Judge, will appear and bring light to the righteous and elect who believe in the Name of the Lord of spirits. It is better for those who deny the Name to never have been born. They will not be able to look on the faces of the righteous ones, because the elect will shine with the light of the Lord of spirits. The abode of the righteous will be beneath the wings of the Lord, their mouths full of blessings, and their lips praising the Name. Enoch sees angels blessing the Lord. He says that is where he too has been assigned to be. His countenance was changed so that he shines with the divine light. He hears four voices, one on each side of the Glory. These are the four angels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Phanuel (pronounced fan-you-el?). He sees the secrets of the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars.

There is a brief story about Wisdom, how she tried to make her dwelling among the children of men but could find no home there, so she returned to her place in heaven and became established among the angels.

Enoch sees the stars and how God calls them by their names. An angel tells him that these are also the names of the holy who dwell on earth, the ones who believe in the divine Name. God says his Elect One will sit on the throne of glory on the day of judgement. "I will transform the heavens and the earth and make them blessings." The elect ones will dwell there, but sinners and evildoers won't set foot thereon.

Enoch sees the Chief of Days, with hair white like wool, and with him another who has the appearance of a man. He asks an angel about the Son of Man who is with the Chief of Days. (This vision is based on Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man who comes to him riding on the clouds.) This is the Judge. Righteousness belongs to him, the angel says, he will destroy the kings and the mighty and break the teeth of sinners. Darkness shall be their dwelling and worms shall be their beds. These are the ones who persecute the holy ones. The prayers of the righteous have ascended to heaven and the blood of the righteous ones speak from the earth that judgement be executed on their behalf.

Enoch sees the Chief of Days seated on his throne of glory and the books of the living are opened before him. The hearts of the holy are filled with joy because judgement has come. At that time, the Son of Man is named in the Presence of the Lord. But even before the constellations were created, before the stars were made, his name was named before the Lord of spirits. He is a staff to the righteous, a light to the gentiles, and the hope of those who are troubled. All who dwell on earth will fall down in front of the Elect One and worship before him. The wisdom of the Lord will reveal him to the holy and righteous and he will save them, but the kings and the strong won't be saved. As stubble to the fire so shall they burn before the face of the holy. The have denied the Lord of spirits and his Anointed one (the Messiah, the Son of Man). On the day of their affliction there will be rest. Wisdom will be poured out

like water. The Elect One stands before the Lord of spirits and he will judge all the secret things. The holy and elect will be changed so that the light of days remains upon them. Even the gentiles will be saved through the compassion of the Lord, though they will have no honor before him. The dead will rise and the righteous among them shall be chosen. After the judgement there will be no mercy for sinners. The Elect One will sit on his throne and all the secrets of wisdom will come from his mouth. The hills will skip like lambs satisfied with milk and all the righteous will become angels in heaven. The Elect One shall arise and redeem the earth and the righteous will dwell on it. Enoch sees mountains of iron, copper, silver, and gold, but in the presence of the Elect One they melt like wax before the fire. Gold and silver for the rich and iron and bronze for war will disappear from the earth. Angels of punishment prepare fetters for the kings and mighty of the earth. When the Righteous and Elect One appears the righteous shall have rest from the oppression of sinners. Kings and potentates are cast into a deep valley of burning fire. The four archangels fetter rogue angels and cast them into a burning furnace. God says that the kings of the earth will behold his Elect One sitting on the throne of glory judging Azazel (Satan) with his host of evil angels.

In those days the chiefs of the evil angels will rouse the kings of the earth from their thrones. They will break forth as lions from their lairs and hungry wolves from their dens to invade the holy land of the elect ones, but they won't be able to penetrate the city of the righteous (Jerusalem). They will begin warring with each other until there will be corpses without number of their men. Death will swallow up sinners from the presence of the elect. The days of the holy will be without number. They shall live in the light of eternal life.

Enoch falls in terror before the Most High and his thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads of angels. Michael sends an

angel to raise him up and he is taught the secrets of the moon and the stars, the thunder and lightning, the rain and the snow. Two angels are given cords to measure the faithfulness of the elect and those who hold fast to righteousness. They will also measure the dead who rise on judgement day.

The Lord of Spirits places the Elect One on the throne of glory and he judges all the works of the holy ones in heaven above. All the angels, the holy ones, and the Elect One raise a single voice and bless and glorify and sanctify and exalt, saying, "blessed is he, may the Name of the Lord of spirits be blessed for ever and ever." The Lord commands the kings, the mighty, and the exalted to open their eyes and acknowledge the Elect One. Pain seizes them when they see a child of woman sitting on the throne of his glory. They glorify and bless the Son of Man who was hidden from the beginning, but they become so afraid of the Lord of spirits that they flee from his presence, their faces filled with shame. The wrath of the Lord rests on them and the righteous will never see them again. Then the righteous and elect will be clothed with garments of glory.

After this there are some chapters that concern Noah and the flood. The archangel Michael instructs Noah in the secrets of the Book of Parables of his great-grandfather Enoch (this is the present book, also called the Similitudes of Enoch). There is a dialogue between Michael and Raphael about the terrifying punishments given to the wicked. There is a long list of the names of the angels who will be punished and a discussion of the oath by which the heavens were suspended and the earth was founded in the waters. The oath has a secret number equal to the *gematria* (numerology) of the Chief of Days. It keeps the sun, moon, and stars in their courses. There is great joy among the righteous because the name of the Son of Man was revealed to them.

In the last chapter Enoch says that he ascended into heaven. There Michael showed him all the secrets of creation. He rises up to the heaven of heavens where he sees a house built out of hailstones and, among those hailstones, tongues of fire of the holy living creatures that support the chariot throne. (The house and the tongues of fire are taken from the Book of the Watchers.) There are seraphim and cherubim and ophanim everywhere and thousands upon thousands, myriads on myriads of angels. The Chief of Days comes out of the house of hailstones, attended by Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Phanuel. Enoch falls on his face, his whole body weak from fear, but he cries with a loud voice, blessing, glorifying, and extolling the Lord of spirits. Michael comes to him, greets him with his voice, and tells him, "You are the Son of Man who is born for righteousness. All shall walk in your ways, since righteousness never forsakes you. There will be length of days with the Son of Man and all the righteous will have peace." (Enoch has been seeing visions of the Elect One, the Son of Man, and now it turns out that he himself is the Son of Man.)

2 Enoch was written sometime before 70 CE. No one is sure how much earlier. My own idea is that it predates 55 CE, the time that 2 Corinthians was written, because Paul refers to an ascension to the third heaven and he also calls the place of ascension Paradise (2 Cor. 12:2–4). In 2 Enoch Paradise is in the third heaven.

In the last year of his life two angels appear to Enoch, their faces shining like the sun and their wings brighter than gold. They tell him to tell his children that he is ascending into heaven but that he will return. On their wings they take him up to the first heaven where he sees an enormous sea, the rulers of the star orders, and the storehouses of snow and dew. In the second heaven he sees darkness and angels weeping. These are renegade angels who did not obey the divine authority. The third heaven is a paradise of fruit trees and singing angels. It's a land of milk and honey, oil

and wine, reserved for the just who have kindness in their hearts. To the north of paradise, however, is a region of darkness where merciless angels torture people who have been cruel to others during their lives. In the fourth heaven Enoch traces the circuits of the sun and the moon. The fifth heaven is the place of punishment for the Watchers, those angels who descended from heaven to take wives from the daughters of men. They have shriveled faces and silent mouths and do not sing to the Lord. In the sixth heaven he sees the archangels who administer all of creation. In the seventh there is a vast light and nine regiments of different orders of angels. He becomes dreadfully afraid and shakes with great terror. He is shown the throne of God far off in the tenth heaven.

The angels who have been escorting Enoch leave him there in the seventh heaven and he feels horribly alone and afraid. The Lord God sends the archangel Gabriel to bring him up to the throne. From the tenth heaven he looks down on the eighth and ninth heavens and sees the constellations of the zodiac and the homes of the constellations. The throne itself is surrounded by cherubim and seraphim singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory." Enoch looks on the face of the Lord. It is like iron glowing from the fire, both terrifying and inexpressibly beautiful. God says, "Enoch, arise and stand before me into eternity." He commands the archangel Michael to take Enoch out of his earthly clothing and to anoint him with ointment and clothe him in garments of glory. The ointment has a sweet fragrance and shines like the sun's rays. When Michael is finished, Enoch looks at himself and sees that he is wrapped in glory like one of the archangels.

An angel teaches him many facts about the creation and then bids him write down books about the fate of all the people of the world. In sixty days Enoch writes down 366 books. God himself

then instructs Enoch in the secrets of the seven days of creation, secrets he has not even told the angels. He tells Enoch to take everything he has been taught and all of the books that he has written and go down again to the earth to teach his children what he has learned. “When they have learned, they will know that I am the creator of all things and that there is no other God before me. Because of all the iniquity on earth I will send a deluge to wipe it clean. New generations will arise on the earth and because of what you have taught your children they will know about the one God.” He gives Enoch thirty days to instruct his children. After that, angels will come to take him back to heaven, where he will stand to eternity before the throne. An angel then freezes his face, because if it is not changed, no one will be able to look at his glory.

The angels return Enoch to his bed. He asks his son Methuselah to gather the whole household so that he can tell everyone what has happened to him. For thirty days he teaches his household about God, the secrets of the universe, and the proper way of living. Then the angels return for him. He asks Methuselah to gather the whole extended family and the elders of the people so that he can teach them before he returns to heaven the next day. All the people hear that he is returning to heaven. Two thousand assemble and everyone begins to kiss him goodbye. After Enoch has talked to everyone and taught them, darkness descends on the earth and the angels take him to the highest heaven. The Lord receives Enoch and places him in his presence. With Enoch in heaven, light returns to the earth.

After this there is a long story with the theme of priesthood. Methuselah, the son of Enoch, becomes a priest. When he dies, the priesthood passes to Methuselah’s son Nir the brother of Noah. Nir does not have relations with his wife Sopanima after he becomes a priest. In her old age she becomes pregnant. Horrified

and ashamed she hides herself away. When Nir sends for her, she is heavily pregnant. He is mortified and ashamed that she is with child. He berates her for dishonoring him and his family and she falls over dead in front of him. I didn't strike her, he says to himself, I only spoke words to her! He goes to his brother Noah and tells him everything. The two of them inspect the body and wrap it in black robes. God is good, they say, none of the people will know of our shame and humiliation if we bury the body secretly. They go out to dig a grave. While they are away, the dead Sopanima gives birth. When they return, they find the child and are horrified and afraid because the baby is well grown and looks like a three-year-old. The child speaks to them and blesses the Lord. They see the seal of the priesthood on his chest and realize that it is a miracle of the Lord. Having washed the child, they dress him in priestly robes and give him the name Melchisedek. God appears to Nir in a night vision and tells him about the coming destruction of the earth when all living beings will die. "Do not worry about the child, Nir. In forty days I will send my archangel Michael to take him to the Garden of Eden, so that he will be safe from the deluge. I will appoint him chief among all the priests that have ever been." When Michael comes, he tells Nir that Melchisedek will be in the Garden of Eden forever, but there will be another priest named Melchisedek in the future who will sire a line of twelve priests. After this Noah builds the ark, the doors of heaven are opened, and the rains come.

Chapter 21
Daniel Merkur - The Hypnosis Theory of Mysticism

Editor: This excerpt is from Daniel Merkur's book *Relating to God: Clinical Psychoanalysis, Spirituality, and Theism* (Lanham, Maryland: Jason Aronson, 2014: 197–200). Dr. Merkur is a psychoanalyst who lives in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He is also a scholar at the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto. His work is a spectacular blend of insights on religious experience, mysticism, psychoanalysis, anthropology, and history. Some of his books include *Gnosis*: *An Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Unions, Mystical Moments and Unitive Thinking,* and *Explorations of the Psychoanalytic Mystics*.

Daniel Merkur

Unlike many modern theological writers, Teresa (1946, II, p. 286) explicitly listed trance as a synonym of ecstasy and rapture. Coe (1916, p. 274), Pratt (1921, pp. 449-51), and Leuba (1925, pp. 171-72), among the older psychologists of religion, maintained that some or all mysticism is or is closely similar to hypnosis that happens to have religious content. Ernest Jones (1923) agreed; but psychoanalysts and other depth psychologists generally neglected

the hypnosis theory of mysticism. Following the revival of the practice of hypnotherapy in World War Two, writers on hypnosis frequently asserted that mystical phenomena can be produced through hypnosis (Gindes, 1951, pp. 11-12; Williams, 1952; Estabrooks, 1957, pp. 97-123; Edmunds, 1961; Gill & Brenman, 1961, pp. 294-318; Kim, 1967, 1969; Tart, 1970; Gibson, 1977, pp. 95-118; Matheson, 1979, p. 17). Authors for whom the term hypnosis refers to the use of suggestion, rather than to a state of trance or dissociation, have regarded mystical union and self-hypnosis as different uses of trance states; but the issue is then nominalistic. Arbman, who was a historian of religions, maintained that the historical use of trance states in the world's religions depended largely but not exclusively on self-hypnosis. Providing only that religious autosuggestions were used to determine their contents, religious trances might also be induced through hetero-hypnosis and narcotic drugs, or occur spontaneously as symptoms of hysteria and epilepsy. The psychoanalytic anthropologist Devereux (1966), along with many other anthropologists, treated as a foregone conclusion the identity of ecstatic trance with hypnosis; as did the existential psychoanalyst Arieti (1976, p. 253). The thesis was even given reversed philosophical implication by the Buddhist writers Sasamoto (1962) and Onda (1967), who regarded hypnosis as an effective means by which to achieve Zen Buddhist experiences.

The hypnosis theory of mysticism has been confirmed by experimental psychological research. Mystical experiences, encompassing a loss of personal identity, followed by a sense of infinite being, and finally a consciousness of nothing, have been produced in deep hetero-hypnotic states (Tart, 1970; Sherman, 1972). In the 1960s, Western interest in South and East Asian religions inspired psychological research on meditation. Deikman (1963), who pioneered experimental meditation, hypothesized that the difference between hypnosis and mysticism is limited to the content of the suggestions. Statistical

studies include correlations of religious experience and hypnotic susceptibility (Gibbons & De Jarnette, 1972); meditation susceptibility and hypnotic susceptibility (Van Nuys, 1973; Barmark & Gaunitz, 1979; Heide, Wadlington, & Lundy, 1980); and autonomic relaxation in meditation and self-hypnosis (Walrath & Hamilton, 1975).

At the same time, academic psychologists who conducted experimental research on meditation introduced theories of meditation that were grounded in the paradigm of cognitive psychology. Because academic methodology prohibited mention of unconscious processes, meditative states came increasingly to be explained in terms of conscious attention (van Nuys, 1971; Davidson & Goleman, 1977; Davidson, Goleman, & Schwartz, 1984). Similar methodological grandstanding disputed whether hypnosis involves a discrete state of consciousness (for a summary of the controversy, see Merkur, 1984), leading to the disappearance of the term in connection with meditation research. Restriction of theorizing to the psychology of consciousness cannot account, however, for the phenomenology of the *scala contemplationis*. Meditations that restrict attention to monotonous repetitions of single, brief prayers are able to induce an incremental, cumulative loss or inhibition of otherwise ordinary functions of consciousness, such as sense perception, memory, imagination, and thinking. Stace (1960), whom Forman (1990a, pp. 107-8; 1991 pp. 102-3) cited and followed, assumed that this incremental restriction of conscious functions reaches its maximum in *introvertive mystical experiences*.

Suppose that, after having got rid of all sensations, one should go on to exclude from consciousness all sensuous images, and then all abstract thoughts, reasoning processes, volitions, and other particular mental contents; what would there then be left of consciousness? There would be no mental content whatever but rather a complete emptiness, vacuum, void. One would suppose *a priori* that con-

sciousness would then entirely lapse and one would fall asleep or become unconscious. But the introvertive mystics—thousands of them all over the world—unanimously assert that they have attained to this complete vacuum of particular mental contents, but that what then happens is quite different from a lapse into unconsciousness. On the contrary, what emerges is a state of *pure* consciousness—"pure" in the sense that it is not the consciousness of any empirical content. It has no content except itself. (Stace, 1960, pp 85-86)

But this simply isn't the fact! Mystical experience isn't a question of whittling consciousness down to its minimum, which is therefore "pure" consciousness. The ligature and contemplation increase in tandem. [By "ligature" he means the inhibition of conscious ego functions during meditation and by "contemplation" he means a wide variety of religious experiences, including mystical unions, pictorial visions, voices, etc.] The inhibition of conscious ego functions coincides with the involuntary occurrence of extraordinarily varied religious experiences, which include mystical unions, but may alternatively involve dream-like pictorial visions, voices and locutions, involuntary motor activities, and so on. The contents of raptures are not functions of the ligature and can convincingly be traced to the prior meditations only in very small part. For example, the *Cloud* author's advice to meditate on a monosyllabic word such as "God" or "Love" may have encouraged the onset of an experience of God, rather than an angel, or a saint; but it does not contain sufficient cognitive content to explain the further determination, for example, of a mystical union with God, as against a transport to behold God enthroned in Heaven. To account for the discrepancy between meditations and the raptures that followed, Christian theology traditionally appealed to the supernatural effects of divine grace within the human soul.

Cognitive psychologists—and philosophers who follow their lead—are obliged by their methodologies to discuss the inhibitions

of conscious functions as though they were corollaries of the prior concentration of attention; but strictly speaking, it is logically necessary to postulate an intervening process that responds to voluntary concentration by producing involuntary inhibitions. It is similarly logically necessary to account for the rich and varied contents of partly or wholly involuntary contemplative experiences; and here again it is not persuasive to attribute the phenomena to attentional concentration alone. If appeal is not to be made to the supernatural, a theory of the unconscious psyche is warranted.

I have elsewhere discussed mystical experiences of apparent nothingness, such as the eighth *jnana*, "neither perception nor non-perception," of Mahayana Buddhism, and the *ayin*, "nothing," of the kabbalah, as the manifest contents of dream states that have culturally distinctive connotations. For Buddhists, the void is paradoxically the nature of suchness, and suchness is paradoxically void. For kabbalists, nothing is paradoxically pregnant with divine creativity, a fountain ever ready to burst forth with holy power. Although Buddhists and kabbalists do sometimes refer to their experiences as pure consciousness, their highly different accounts of pure consciousness suggest that there is more going on in their experiences than they have appreciated (Merkur, 1999, pp. 81-87).

We need, moreover, to give serious attention to the problem of conceptualizing consciousness. The Muslim philosopher Ibn Sina (980-1037), who was known in Latin as Avicenna, introduced the idea that consciousness is the product of bringing the several senses together in a unified capacity for perception. He used Aristotle's term the "common sense," *aisthesis koine* (Robinson, 1989,74-76); but he invested it with an original meaning. Aristotle, who had closely related perception to thinking, apparently intended common sense to refer to the process of thinking conceptually about sense perceptions—a reflective thinking, self-observation, self-awareness, or self-consciousness. Ibn Sina used Aristotle's

term but was attempting to formulate a different phenomenon. Ibn Sina was not referring to a special application of conceptual thinking when he asserted that the common sense "receives all the forms which are imprinted on the five senses and transmitted to it from them" (Avicenna, 1952, p. 31; see also: H. Wolfson, 1935; Harvey, 1975). Freud (1900) echoed Ibn Sina when he described consciousness as "a sense-organ for the perception of psychical qualities" (p. 615). The common sense is necessarily conscious. There can be no common sense, no joining of the separate senses, without producing consciousness. The joining is what causes consciousness to arise. By contrast, the imagination of "pure consciousness" as though it were a box that contents get put into and taken out of leaves the existence of consciousness unexplained. "Pure consciousness" is not a coherent psychological theory that can be offered as an alternative to the formulations of Ibn Sina and Freud. It does not belong to the category of psychological theory. "Pure consciousness" is a trick of language, a mere reification of the term "consciousness" that has no explanatory power whatever. And it is based, I argue, on a misunderstanding of the testimony of the mystics.

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Chapter 22
Evelyn Underhill – Ecstasy and Rapture

Editor: This is chapter eight from Evelyn Underhill's book *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*. Published in 1911, it is probably the most famous book on mysticism ever written. Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941) was a remarkable woman. Author of more than thirty books, three of them novels and three of them poetry, most on spirituality, she was happily married to an English barrister, with a life of social activity and charitable works. She was also a mystic in her own right. While still a child she had experiences of the unitive state, "abrupt experiences of the peaceful, undifferentiated plane of reality – like the 'still desert' of the mystic – in which there was no multiplicity or need of explanation." She was the spiritual director for hundreds of people. She lectured widely at universities and wrote columns and did reviews for a prominent journal. She was also the first woman to lecture to the clergy in the Church of England and the first woman to conduct spiritual retreats for the Church. To top it all off she was an award-winning master bookbinder.

As you read, note how some of the features of trancework explored in *Easy Ecstasy* are fundamental parts of Christian mysticism. Examples include ecstatic trance, loss of touch with the outside

world, loss of self, ineffable apprehensions of the Real, and spontaneous anesthesia and catalepsy (see the chapter on Ultra-Height). Some words have changed or fallen out of use over the last hundred years. Orison equals prayer. Ecstasy equals trance.

Evelyn Underhill

Since the object of all contemplation is the production of that state of intimate communion in which the mystics declare that the self is "in God and God is in her," it might be supposed that the orison [prayer] of union represented the end of mystical activity, in so far as it is concerned with the attainment of a transitory but exalted consciousness of "oneness with the Absolute." Nearly all the great contemplatives, however, describe as a distinct, and regard as a more advanced phase of the spiritual consciousness, the group of definitely ecstatic states in which the concentration of interest on the Transcendent is so complete, the gathering up and pouring out of life on this one point so intense, that the subject is more or less entranced, and becomes, for the time of the ecstasy, unconscious of the external world. In ordinary contemplation he refused to attend to that external world: it was there, a blurred image, at the fringe of his conscious field, but he deliberately left it on one side. In ecstasy he *cannot* attend to it. None of its messages reach him: not even those most insistent of all messages which are translated into the terms of bodily pain.

All mystics agree in regarding such ecstasy as an exceptionally favourable state; the one in which man's spirit is caught up to the most immediate union with the divine. The word has become a synonym for joyous exaltation, for the inebriation of the Infinite. The induced ecstasies of the Dionysian mysteries, the metaphysical raptures of the Neoplatonists, the voluntary or involuntary trance of Indian mystics and Christian saints—all these, however widely they may differ in transcendental value, agree in claiming such value, in

declaring that this change in the quality of consciousness brought with it a valid and ineffable apprehension of the Real. Clearly, this apprehension will vary in quality and content with the place of the subject in the spiritual scale. The ecstasy is merely the psycho-physical condition which accompanies it. "It is hardly a paradox to say," says Myers, "that the evidence for ecstasy is stronger than the evidence for any other religious belief. Of all the subjective experiences of religion, ecstasy is that which has been most urgently, perhaps to the psychologist most convincingly asserted; and it is not confined to any one religion. … From the medicine man of the lowest savages up to St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul, with Buddha and Mahomet on the way, we find records which, though morally and intellectually much differing, are in psychological essence the same."[732]

There are three distinct aspects under which the ecstatic state may be studied: (*a*) the physical, (*b*) the psychological, (*c*) the mystical. Many of the deplorable misunderstandings and still more deplorable mutual recriminations which surround its discussion come from the refusal of experts in one of these three branches to consider the results arrived at by the other two.

A. Physically considered, ecstasy is a trance; more or less deep, more or less prolonged. The subject may slide into it gradually from a period of absorption in, or contemplation of, some idea which has filled the field of consciousness: or, it may come on suddenly, the appearance of the idea—or even some word or symbol suggesting the idea—abruptly throwing the subject into an entranced condition. This is the state which some mystical writers call Rapture. The distinction, however, is a conventional one: and the works of the mystics describe many intermediate forms.

During the trance, breathing and circulation are depressed. The body is more or less cold and rigid, remaining in the exact position which

it occupied at the oncoming of the ecstasy, however difficult and unnatural this pose may be. Sometimes entrancement is so deep that there is complete anesthesia, as in the case which I quote from the life of St. Catherine of Siena.[733] Credible witnesses report that Bernadette, the visionary of Lourdes, held the flaming end of a candle in her hand for fifteen minutes during one of her ecstasies. She felt no pain, neither did the flesh show any marks of burning. Similar instances of ecstatic anesthesia abound in the lives of the saints and are also characteristic of certain pathological states.[734]

The trance includes, according to the testimony of the ecstatics, two distinct phases—(*a*) the short period of lucidity and (*b*) a longer period of complete unconsciousness, which may pass into a death-like catalepsy, lasting for hours; or, as once with St. Teresa, for days. "The difference between union and trance," says Teresa, "is this: that the latter lasts longer and is more visible outwardly, because the breathing gradually diminishes, so that it becomes impossible to speak or to open the eyes. And though this very thing occurs when the soul is in union, there is more violence in a trance, for the natural warmth vanishes, I know not how, when the rapture is deep, and in all these kinds of orison [prayer] there is more or less of this. When it is deep, as I was saying, the hands become cold and sometimes stiff and straight as pieces of wood; as to the body if the rapture comes on when it is standing or kneeling it remains so; and the soul is so full of the joy of that which Our Lord is setting before it, that it seems to forget to animate the body and abandons it. If the rapture lasts, the nerves are made to feel it."[735]

Such ecstasy as this, so far as its physical symptoms go, is not of course the peculiar privilege of the mystics. It is an abnormal bodily state, caused by a psychic state: and this causal psychic state may be healthy or unhealthy, the result of genius or disease. It is common in the little understood type of personality called "sensitive" or mediumistic: it is a well-known symptom of certain mental

and nervous illnesses. A feeble mind concentrated on one idea—like a hypnotic subject gazing at one spot—easily becomes entranced; however trivial the idea which gained possession of his consciousness. Apart from its content, then, ecstasy carries no guarantee of spiritual value. It merely indicates the presence of certain abnormal psycho-physical conditions: an alteration of the normal equilibrium, a shifting of the threshold of consciousness, which leaves the body, and the whole usual "external world" outside instead of inside the conscious field, and even affects those physical functions—such as breathing—which are almost entirely automatic. Thus ecstasy, physically considered, may occur in any person in whom (1) the threshold of consciousness is exceptionally mobile and (2) there is a tendency to dwell upon one governing idea or intuition. Its worth depends entirely on the objective value of that idea or intuition.

In the hysterical patient, thanks to an unhealthy condition of the centres of consciousness, any trivial or irrational idea, any one of the odds and ends stored up in the subliminal region, may thus become fixed, dominate the mind, and produce entrancement. Such ecstasy is an illness: the emphasis is on the pathological state which makes it possible. In the mystic, the idea which fills his life is so great a one—the idea of God—that, in proportion as it is vivid, real, and intimate, it inevitably tends to monopolize the field of consciousness. Here the emphasis is on the overpowering strength of spirit, not on the feeble and unhealthy state of body or mind.[736] This true ecstasy, says Godferneaux, is not a malady, but "the extreme form of a state which must be classed amongst the ordinary accidents of conscious life."[737]

The mystics themselves are fully aware of the importance of this distinction. Ecstasies, no less than visions and voices, must they declare, be subjected to unsparing criticism before they are recognized as divine: whilst some are undoubtedly "of God," others are no less clearly "of the devil." "The great doctors of the mystic life,"

says Malaval, "teach that there are two sorts of rapture, which must be carefully distinguished. The first are produced in persons but little advanced in the Way, and still full of selfhood; either by the force of a heated imagination which vividly apprehends a sensible object, or by the artifice of the Devil. These are the raptures which St. Teresa calls, in various parts of her works, Raptures of Feminine Weakness. The other sort of Rapture is, on the contrary, the effect of pure intellectual vision in those who have a great and generous love for God. To generous souls who have utterly renounced themselves, God never fails in these raptures to communicate high things."[738]

All the mystics agree with Malaval in finding the test of a true ecstasy, not in its outward sign, but in its inward grace, its after-value: and here psychology would do well to follow their example. The ecstatic states, which are supreme instances of the close connection between body and soul, have bodily as well as mental results: and those results are as different and as characteristic as those observed in healthy and in morbid organic processes. If the concentration has been upon the highest centre of consciousness, the organ of spiritual perception—if a door has really been opened by which the self has escaped for an instant to the vision of That Which Is—the ecstasy will be good for life. The entrancement of disease, on the contrary is always bad for life. Its concentration being upon the lower instead of the higher levels of mentality, it depresses rather than enhances the vitality, the fervour, or the intelligence of its subject: and leaves behind it an enfeebled will, and often moral and intellectual chaos.[739] "Ecstasies that do not produce considerable profit either to the persons themselves or others, deserve to be suspected," says Augustine Baker, "and when any marks of their approaching are perceived, the persons ought to divert their minds some other way."[740] It is the difference between a healthy appetite for nourishing food and a morbid craving for garbage. The same organs of digestion are used in satisfying both: yet he would be a hardy physiologist who undertook to discredit all nutrition by a reference to its degenerate forms.

Sometimes both kinds of ecstasy, the healthy and the psychopathic, are seen in the same person. Thus in the cases of St. Catherine of Genoa and St. Catherine of Siena it would seem that as their health became feebler and the nervous instability always found in persons of genius increased, their ecstasies became more frequent; but these were not healthy ecstasies, such as those which they experienced in the earlier stages of their careers, and which brought with them an access of vitality. They were the results of increasing weakness of body, not of the overpowering strength of the spirit: and there is evidence that Catherine of Genoa, that acute self-critic, was conscious of this. "Those who attended on her did not know how to distinguish one state from the other. And hence on coming to; she would sometimes say, 'Why did you let me remain in this quietude, from which I have almost died?'"[741] Her earlier ecstasies, on the contrary, had in a high degree the positive character of exaltation and life-enhancement consequent upon extreme concentration on the Absolute; as well as the merely negative character of annihilation of the surface-consciousness. She came from them with renewed health and strength, as from a resting in heavenly places and a feeding on heavenly food: and side by side with this ecstatic life, fulfilled the innumerable duties of her active vocation as hospital matron and spiritual mother of a large group of disciples. "Many times," says her legend, "she would hide herself in some secret place and there stay: and being sought she was found upon the ground, her face hidden in her hands, altogether beyond herself, in such a state of joy as is beyond thought or speech: and being called—yea, even in a loud voice—she heard not. And at other times she would go up and down … as if beyond herself, drawn by the impulse of love, she did this. And certain other times she remained for the space of six hours as if dead: but hearing herself called, suddenly she got up, and answering she would at once go about all that needed to be done even the humblest things.[742] And in thus leaving the All, she went without any grief, because she fled all selfhood (*la proprietà*) as if it were the devil. And when she came forth from her hiding-place

her face was rosy as it might be a cherub's; and it seemed as if she might have said, 'Who shall separate me from the love of God?'"[743] "Very often," says St. Teresa, describing the results of such rapturous communion with Pure Love as that from which St. Catherine came joyous and rosy-faced, "he who was before sickly and full of pain comes forth healthy and even with new strength: for it is something great that is given to the soul in rapture."[744]

B. Psychologically considered, all ecstasy is a form—the most perfect form—of the state which is technically called "complete mono-ideism." That withdrawal of consciousness from circumference to centre, that deliberate attention to *one thing* , which we discussed in Recollection, is here pushed—voluntarily or involuntarily—to its logical conclusion. It is (1) always paid for by psycho-physical disturbances; (2) rewarded in healthy cases by an enormous lucidity, a supreme intuition in regard to the one thing on which the self's interest has been set.

Such ecstasy, then, is an exalted form of contemplation, and might be expected in appropriate subjects to develop naturally from that state. "A simple difference of degree," says Maury, "separates ecstasy from the action of forcibly fixing an idea in the mind. Contemplation implies exercise of will, and the power of interrupting the extreme tension of the mind. In ecstasy, which is contemplation carried to its highest pitch, the will, although in the strictest sense able to provoke the state, is nevertheless unable to suspend it."[745]

In "complete mono-ideism" then, the attention to one thing and the inattention to all else, is so entire that the subject is entranced. Consciousness has been withdrawn from those centres which receive and respond to the messages of the external world: he neither sees, feels, nor hears. The *Ego dormio et cor meum vigilat* of the contemplative ceases to be a metaphor and becomes a realistic description. It must

be remembered that the whole trend of mystical education has been toward the production of this fixity of attention. Recollection and Quiet lead up to it. Contemplation cannot take place without it. All the mystics assure us that a unification of consciousness, in which all outward things are forgot, is the necessary prelude of union with the Divine; for consciousness of the Many and consciousness of the One are mutually exclusive states. Ecstasy, for the psychologist, is such a unification in its extreme form. The absorption of the self in the one idea, the one desire, is so profound—and in the case of the great mystics so impassioned—that everything else is blotted out. The tide of life is withdrawn, not only from those higher centres which are the seats of perception and of thought, but also from those lower centres which govern the physical life. The whole vitality of the subject is so concentrated on the transcendental world—or, in a morbid ecstatic, on the idea which dominates his mind—that body and brain alike are depleted of their energy in the interests of this supreme act.

Since mystics have, as a rule, the extreme susceptibility to suggestions and impressions which is characteristic of artistic and creative types, it is not surprising that their ecstasies are often evoked, abruptly, by the exhibition of, or concentration upon, some loved and special symbol of the divine. Such symbols form the rallying-points about which are gathered a whole group of ideas and intuitions. Their presence—sometimes the sudden thought of them—will be enough, in psychological language, to provoke a discharge of energy along some particular path: that is to say, to stir to life all those ideas and intuitions which belong to the self's consciousness of the Absolute, to concentrate vitality on them, and introduce the self into that world of perception of which they are, as it were, the material keys. Hence the profound significance of symbols for some mystics: their paradoxical clinging to outward forms, whilst declaring that the spiritual and intangible alone is real.

For the Christian mystics, the sacraments and mysteries of faith have always provided such a *point d'appui*; and these often play a large part in the production of their ecstasies. For St. Catherine of Siena, and also very often for her namesake of Genoa, the reception of Holy Communion was the prelude to ecstasy. Julian of Norwich[746] and St. Francis of Assisi[747] became entranced whilst gazing on the crucifix. We are told of Denis the Carthusian that towards the end of his life, hearing the *Veni Creator* or certain verses of the psalms, he was at once rapt in God and lifted up from the earth.[748]

Of St. Catherine of Siena, her biographer says that "she used to communicate with such fervour that immediately afterwards she would pass into the state of ecstasy, in which for hours she would be totally unconscious. On one occasion, finding her in this condition, they (the Dominican friars) forcibly threw her out of the church at midday, and left her in the heat of the sun watched over by some of her companions till she came to her senses." Another, "catching sight of her in the church when she was in ecstasy, came down and pricked her in many places with a needle. Catherine was not aroused in the least from her trance, but afterwards, when she came back to her senses, she felt the pain in her body and perceived that she had thus been wounded."[749]

It is interesting to compare with this objective description, the subjective account of ecstatic union which St. Catherine gives in her "Divine Dialogue." Here, the deeper self of the mystic is giving in a dramatic form its own account of its inward experiences: hence we see the inward side of that outward state of entrancement, which was all that onlookers were able to perceive. As usual in the Dialogue, the intuitive perceptions of the deeper self are attributed by St. Catherine to the Divine Voice speaking in her soul.

"Oftentimes, through the perfect union which the soul has made with Me, she is raised from the earth almost as if the heavy body became

light. But this does not mean that the heaviness of the body is taken away, but that the union of the soul with Me is more perfect than the union of the body with the soul; wherefore the strength of the spirit, united with Me, raises the weight of the body from the earth, leaving it as if immoveable and all pulled to pieces in the affection of the soul. Thou rememberest to have heard it said of some creatures, that were it not for My Goodness, in seeking strength for them, they would not be able to live; and I would tell thee that, in the fact that the souls of some do not leave their bodies, is to be seen a greater miracle than in the fact that some have arisen from the dead, so great is the union which they have with Me. I, therefore, sometimes for a space withdraw from the union, making the soul return to the vessel of her body … from which she was separated by the affection of love. From the body she did not depart, because that cannot be except in death; the bodily powers alone departed, becoming united to Me through affection of love. The memory is full of nothing but Me, the intellect, elevated, gazes upon the object of My Truth; the affection, which follows the intellect, loves and becomes united with that which the intellect sees. These powers being united and gathered together and immersed and inflamed in Me, the body loses its feeling, so that the seeing eye sees not, and the hearing ear hears not, and the tongue does not speak; except as the abundance of the heart will sometimes permit it, for the alleviation of the heart and the praise and glory of My Name. The hand does not touch and the feet walk not, because the members are bound with the sentiment of Love."[750]

A healthy ecstasy so deep as this seems to be the exclusive prerogative of the mystics: perhaps because so great a passion, so profound a concentration, can be produced by nothing smaller than their flaming love of God. But as the technique of contemplation is employed more or less consciously by all types of creative genius—by inventors and philosophers, by poets, prophets, and musicians, by all the followers of the "Triple Star," no less than by the mystic saints—so

too this apotheosis of contemplation, the ecstatic state, sometimes appears in a less violent form, acting healthily and normally, in artistic and creative personalities at a complete stage of development. It may accompany the prophetic intuitions of the seer, the lucidity of the great metaphysician, the artist's supreme perception of beauty or truth. As the saint is "caught up to God," so these are "caught up" to their vision: their partial apprehensions of the Absolute Life. Those joyous, expansive outgoing sensations, characteristic of the ecstatic consciousness, are theirs also. Their greatest creations are translations to us, not of something they have thought, but of something they have known, in a moment of ecstatic union with the "great life of the All."

We begin, then, to think that the "pure mono-ideism," which the psychologist identifies with ecstasy, though doubtless a part, is far from being the whole content of this state, True, the ecstatic is absorbed in his one idea, his one love: he is in it and with it: it fills his universe. But this unified state of consciousness does not merely pore upon something already possessed. When it only does this, it is diseased. Its true business is pure perception. It is outgoing, expansive: its goal is something beyond itself. The rearrangement of the psychic self which occurs in ecstasy is not merely concerned with the normal elements of consciousness. It is rather a temporary unification of consciousness round that centre of transcendental perception which mystics call the "apex" or the "spark of the soul." Those deeper layers of personality which normal life keeps below the threshold are active in it: and these are fused with the surface personality by the governing passion, the transcendent love which lies at the basis of all sane ecstatic states. The result is not merely a mind concentrated on one idea nor a heart fixed on one desire, nor even a mind and a heart united in the interests of a beloved thought: but a whole being welded into one, all its faculties, neglecting their normal universe, grouped about a new centre, serving a new life, and piercing like a single flame

the barriers of the sensual world. Ecstasy is the psycho-physical state which may accompany this brief synthetic act.

> C. Therefore, whilst on its physical side ecstasy is an entrancement, on its mental side a complete unification of consciousness, on its mystical side it is an exalted act of perception. It represents the greatest possible extension of the spiritual consciousness in the direction of Pure Being: the "blind intent stretching" here receives its reward in a profound experience of Eternal Life. In this experience the departmental activities of thought and feeling the consciousness of I-hood, of space and time—all that belongs to the World of Becoming and our own place therein—are suspended. The vitality which we are accustomed to split amongst these various things, is gathered up to form a state of "pure apprehension": a vivid intuition of—or if you like conjunction with—the Transcendent. For the time of his ecstasy the mystic is, for all practical purposes, as truly living in the supersensual world as the normal human animal is living in the sensual world. He is experiencing the highest and most joyous of those temporary and unstable states—those "passive unions"—in which his consciousness escapes the limitations of the senses, rises to freedom, and is united for an instant with the "great life of the All."

Ecstasy, then, from the contemplative's point of view, is the development and completion of the orison [prayer] of union, and he is not always at pains to distinguish the two degrees, a fact which adds greatly to the difficulties of students.[751] In both states—though he may, for want of better language, describe his experience in terms of sight—the Transcendent is perceived by contact, not by vision: as, enfolded in darkness with one whom we love, we obtain a knowledge far more complete than that conferred by

the sharpest sight the most perfect mental analysis. In Ecstasy, the apprehension is perhaps more definitely "beatific" than in the orison [prayer] of union. Such memory of his feeling-state as the ecstatic brings back with him is more often concerned with an exultant certainty—a conviction that he has known for once the Reality which hath no image, and solved the paradox of life—than with meek self-loss in that Cloud of Unknowing where the contemplative in union is content to meet his Beloved. The true note of ecstasy, however, its only valid distinction from infused contemplation, lies in *entrancement*; in "being ravished out of fleshly feeling," as St. Paul caught up to the Third Heaven,[752] not in "the lifting of mind unto God." This, of course, is an outward distinction only, and a rough one at that, since entrancement has many degrees: but it will be found the only practical basis of classification.

Probably none but those who have experienced these states know the actual difference between them. Even St. Teresa's psychological insight fails her here, and she is obliged to fall back on the difference between voluntary and involuntary absorption in the divine: a difference, not in spiritual values, but merely in the psycho-physical constitution of those who have perceived these values. "I wish I could explain with the help of God," she says, "wherein union differs from rapture, or from transport, or from flight of the spirit, as they call it, or from trance, which are all one. I mean that all these are only different names for that *one and the same thing, which is also called ecstasy*. It is more excellent than union, the fruits of it are much greater, and its other operations more manifold, for union is uniform in the beginning, the middle, and the end, and is so also interiorly; but as raptures have ends of a much higher kind, they produce effects both within and without [*i.e.* , both physical and psychical]. . . . A rapture is absolutely irresistible; whilst union, inasmuch as we are then on our own ground, may be hindered, though that resistance be painful and violent."[753]

From the point of view of mystical psychology, our interest in ecstasy will centre in two points. (1) What has the mystic to tell us of the Object of his ecstatic perception? (2) What is the nature of the peculiar consciousness which he enjoys in his trance? That is to say, what news does he bring us as to the Being of God and the powers of man?

It may be said generally that on both these points he bears out, amplifies, and expresses under formulae of greater splendour, with an accent of greater conviction, the general testimony of the contemplatives. In fact, we must never forget that an ecstatic is really nothing else than a contemplative of a special kind, with a special psycho-physical make-up. Moreover, we have seen that it is not always easy to determine the exact point at which entrancement takes place, and deep contemplation assumes the ecstatic form. The classification, like all classifications of mental states, is an arbitrary one. Whilst the extreme cases present no difficulty, there are others less complete, which form a graduated series between the deeps of the "Quiet" and the heights of "Rapture." We shall never know, for instance, whether the ecstasies of Plotinus and of Pascal involved true bodily entrancement, or only a deep absorption of the "unitive" kind. So, too, the language of many Christian mystics when speaking of their "raptures" is so vague and metaphorical that it leaves us in great doubt as to whether they mean by Rapture the abrupt suspension of normal consciousness, or merely a sudden and agreeable elevation of soul.

"Ravishing," says Rolle, "as it is showed, in two ways is to be understood. One manner, forsooth, in which a man is ravished out of fleshly feeling; so that for the time of his ravishing plainly he feels nought in flesh, nor what is done of his flesh, and yet he is not dead but quick, for yet the soul to the body gives life. And on this manner saints sometime are ravished, to their profit and other men's learning; as Paul ravished to the third heaven. And on this manner sin-

ners also in vision sometime are ravished, that they may see joys of saints and pains of damned for their correction.[754] And many other as we read of. Another manner of ravishing there is, that is lifting of mind into God by contemplation. And this manner of ravishing is in all that are perfect lovers of God, and in none of them but that love God. And as well this is called a ravishing as the other; for with a violence it is done, and as it were against nature."[755]

It is, however, very confusing to the anxious inquirer when—as too often—"lifting of mind by contemplation" is "as well called a ravishing as the other," and ecstasy is used as a synonym for gladness of heart. Here, so far as is possible, these words will be confined to their strict meaning, and not applied generally to the description of all the outgoing and expansive states of the transcendental consciousness.

What does the mystic claim that he attains in this abnormal condition—this irresistible trance? The price that he pays is heavy, involving much psycho-physical wear and tear. He declares that his rapture or ecstasy includes a moment—often a very short, and always an indescribable moment—in which he enjoys a supreme knowledge of or participation in Divine Reality. He tells us under various metaphors that he then attains Pure Being, his Source, his Origin, his Beloved: "is engulphed in the very thing for which he longs, which is God."[756] "Oh, wonder of wonders," cries Eckhart, "when I think of the union the soul has with God! He makes the enraptured soul to flee out of herself, for she is no more satisfied with anything that can be named. The spring of Divine Love flows out of the soul and draws her out of herself into the unnamed Being, into her first source, which is God alone."[757]

This momentary attainment of the Source, the Origin, is the theme of all descriptions of mystic ecstasy. In Rulman Merswin's "Book of the Nine Rocks," that brief and overwhelming rapture is the end of

the pilgrim's long trials and ascents. "The vision of the Infinite lasted only for a moment: when he came to himself, he felt inundated with life and joy. He asked, 'Where have I been?' and he was answered, 'In the upper school of the Holy Spirit. There you were surrounded by the dazzling pages of the Book of Divine Wisdom.[758] Your soul plunged therein with delight, and the Divine Master of the school has filled her with an exuberant love by which even your physical nature has been transfigured.'"[759] Another Friend of God, Ellina von Crevelsheim, who was of so abnormal a psychic constitution that her absorption in the Divine Love caused her to remain dumb for seven years, was "touched by the Hand of God" at the end of that period, and fell into a five-days' ecstasy, in which "pure truth" was revealed to her, and she was lifted up to an immediate experience of the Absolute. There she "saw the interior of the Father's heart," and was "bound with chains of love, enveloped in light, and filled with peace and joy."[760]

In this transcendent act of union, the mystic sometimes says that he is "conscious of nothing." But it is clear that this expression is figurative, for otherwise he would not have known that there had been an act of union: were his individuality abolished, it could not have been aware of its attainment of God. What he appears to mean is that consciousness so changes its form as to be no longer recognizable or describable in human speech. In the paradoxical language of Richard of St. Victor, "In a wondrous fashion remembering we do not remember, seeing we do not see, understanding we not understand, penetrating we do not penetrate."[761] In this indescribable but most actual state, the whole self, exalted and at white heat, is unified and poured out in one vivid act of impassioned perception, which leaves no room for reflection or self-observation. That aloof "somewhat" in us which watches all our actions, splits our consciousness, has been submerged. The mystic is attending exclusively to Eternity, not to his own perception of Eternity. That he can only consider when the ecstasy itself is at an end.

"All things I then forgot,
My cheek on Him Who for my coming came,
All ceased, and I was not,
Leaving my cares and shame
Among the lilies, and forgetting them."[762]

This is that perfect unity of consciousness, that utter concentration on an experience of love, which excludes all conceptual and analytic acts. Hence, when the mystic says that his faculties were suspended, that he "knew all and knew nought," he really means that he was so concentrated on the Absolute that he ceased to consider his separate existence: so merged in it that he could not perceive it as an object of thought, as the bird cannot see the air which supports it, nor the fish the ocean in which it swims. He really "knows all" but "thinks" nought: "perceives all," but "conceives nought."

The ecstatic consciousness is not self-conscious: it is intuitive not discursive. Under the sway of a great passion, possessed by a great Idea, it has become "a single state of enormous intensity."[763] In this state, it transcends our ordinary processes of knowledge, and plunges deep into the Heart of Reality. A fusion which is the anticipation of the unitive life takes place: and the ecstatic returns from this brief foretaste of freedom saying, "I know, as having known, the meaning of Existence; the sane centre of the universe—at once the wonder and the assurance of the soul."[764] "This utter transformation of the soul in God," says St. Teresa, describing the same experience in the official language of theology, "continues only for an instant: yet while it continues no faculty of the soul is aware of it, or knows what is passing there. Nor can it be understood while we are living on the earth; at least God will not have us understand it, because we must be incapable of understanding it. *I know it by experience*."[765] The utterances of those who know by experience are here of more worth than all the statements of psychology, which are concerned of necessity with the "outward signs" of this "inward and spiritual

grace." To these we must go if we would obtain some hint of that which ecstasy may mean to the ecstatic.

"When the soul, forgetting itself, dwells in that radiant darkness," says Suso, "it loses all its faculties and all its qualities, as St. Bernard has said. And this, more or less completely, according to whether the soul—whether in the body or out of the body—is more or less united to God. This forgetfulness of self is, in a measure, a transformation in God; who then becomes, in a certain manner, all things for the soul, as Scripture saith. In this rapture the soul disappears, but not yet entirely. It acquires, it is true, certain qualities of divinity, but does not naturally become divine. … To speak in the common language, the soul is rapt, by the divine power of resplendent Being, above its natural faculties, into the nakedness of the Nothing."[766]

Here Suso is trying to describe his rapturous attainment of God in the negative terms of Dionysian theology. It is probable that much of the language of that theology originated, not in the abstract philosophizings, but in the actual ecstatic experience, of the Neoplatonists, who—Christian and Pagan alike—believed in, and sometimes deliberately induced, this condition as the supreme method of attaining the One. The whole Christian doctrine of ecstasy, on its metaphysical side, really descends from that great practical transcendentalist Plotinus: who is known to have been an ecstatic, and has left in his Sixth Ennead a description of the mystical trance obviously based upon his own experiences. "Then," he says, "the soul neither sees, nor distinguishes by seeing, nor imagines that there are two things; but becomes as it were another thing, ceases to be itself and belong to itself. It belongs to God and is one with Him, like two concentric circles: concurring they are One; but when they separate, they are two. … Since in this conjunction with Deity there were not two things, but the perceiver was one with the thing perceived, if a man could preserve the memory of what he was when he mingled with the Divine, he would have within himself an image

of God. … For then nothing stirred within him, neither anger, nor desire, nor even reason, nor a certain intellectual perception nor, in short, was he himself moved, if we may assert this; but being in an ecstasy, tranquil and alone with God, he enjoyed an unbreakable calm."[767] Ecstasy, says Plotinus in another part of the same treatise, is "another mode of seeing, a simplification and abandonment of oneself, a desire of contact, rest, and a striving after union." All the phases of the contemplative experience seem to be summed up in this phrase.

It has been said by some critics that the ecstasy of Plotinus was different in kind from the ecstasy of the Christian saints: that it was a philosophic rhapsody, something like Plato's "saving madness," which is also regarded on somewhat insufficient evidence as being an affair of the head and entirely unconnected with the heart. At first sight the arid metaphysical language in which Plotinus tries to tell his love, offers some ground for this view. Nevertheless, the ecstasy itself is a practical matter; and has its root, not in reason, but in a deep-seated passion for the Absolute which is far nearer to the mystic's love of God than to any intellectual curiosity, however sublime. The few passages in which it is mentioned tell us what his mystical genius drove him to do: and not what his philosophical mind encouraged him to think or say. At once when we come to these passages, we notice a rise of temperature, an alteration of values. Plotinus the ecstatic is sure whatever Plotinus the metaphysician may think, that the union with God is a union of hearts: that "by love He may be gotten and holden, but by thought never." He, no less than the mediaeval contemplatives, is convinced—to quote his own words—that the Vision is only for the desirous; for him who has that "loving passion" which "causes the lover to rest in the object of his love."[768] The simile of marriage, of conjunction as the soul's highest bliss, which we are sometimes told that we owe in part to the unfortunate popularity

of the Song of Songs, in part to the sexual aberrations of celibate saints, is found in the work of this hardheaded Pagan philosopher: who was as celebrated for his practical kindness and robust common sense as for his transcendent intuitions of the One.

The greatest of the Pagan ecstatics then, when speaking from experience, anticipates the Christian contemplatives. His words, too, when compared with theirs, show how delicate are the shades which distinguish ecstasy such as this from the highest forms of orison [prayer]. "Tranquil and alone with God"—mingled for an instant of time "like two concentric circles" with the Divine Life," "perceiver and perceived made one"—this is as near as the subtle intellect of Alexandria can come to the reality of that experience in which the impassioned mono-ideism of great spiritual genius conquers the rebellious senses, and becomes, if only for a moment, operative on the highest levels accessible to the human soul. Self-mergence, then—that state of transcendence in which, the barriers of selfhood abolished, we "receive the communication of Life and of Beatitude, in which all things are consummated and all things are renewed"[769]—is the secret of ecstasy, as it was the secret of contemplation. On their spiritual side the two states cannot, save for convenience of description, be divided. Where contemplation becomes expansive, out-going, self-giving, and receives a definite fruition of the Absolute in return, its content is already ecstatic. Whether its outward form shall be so depends on the body of the mystic, not on his soul.

> "Se l' atto della mente
> è tutto consopito,
> en Dio stando rapito,
> ch' en sé non se retrova.
> …
> En mezo de sto mare

essendo sì abissato,
giá non ce trova lato
onde ne possa uscire,
De sé non può pensare
né dir como è formato,
però che, trasformato,
altro sí ha vestire.
Tutto lo suo sentire
en ben sí va notando,
belleza contemplando
la qual non ha colore."[770]

[Translation: "The activity of the mind is lulled to rest: rapt in God, It can no longer find itself … Being so deeply engulphed in that ocean, now it can find no place to issue therefrom. Of itself it cannot think, nor can it say what it is like: because transformed, it hath another vesture. All its perceptions have gone forth to gaze upon the Good, and contemplate that Beauty which has no likeness" (Lauda xci.).]

Thus sang Jacopone da Todi of the ecstatic soul: and here the descriptive powers of one who was both a poet and a mystic bring life and light to the dry theories of psychology.

He continues—and here, in perhaps the finest of all poetic descriptions of ecstasy, he seems to echo at one point Plotinus, at another Richard of St. Victor: at once to veil and reveal the utmost secrets of the mystic life:—

"Aperte son le porte
facta ha conjunzione,
et e in possession
de tutto quel de Dio.
Sente que non sentio,

que non cognove vede,
possede que non crede,
gusta senza sapere.
Però ch' ha sé perduto
tutto senza misura,
possede quel' altura
de summa smesuranza.
Perché non ha tenuto
en sé altra mistura,
quel ben senza figura
recere en abondanza."[771]

[Translation: "The doors are flung wide: conjoined to God, it possesses all that is in Him. It feels that which it felt not: sees that which it knew not, possesses that which it believed not, tastes, though it savours not. Because it is wholly lost to itself, it possesses that height of Unmeasured Perfection. Because it has not retained in itself the mixture of any other thing, it has received in abundance that Imageless Good" (*op. cit.*).] This ineffable "awareness," *en dio stando rapito*, this union with the Imageless Good, is not the only—though it is the purest—form taken by ecstatic apprehension. Many of the visions and voices described in a previous chapter were experienced in the entranced or ecstatic state; generally when the first violence of the rapture was passed. St. Francis and St. Catherine of Siena both received the stigmata in ecstasy: almost all the entrancements of Suso and many of those of St. Teresa and Angela of Foligno, entailed symbolic vision, rather than pure perception of the Absolute. More and more, then, we are forced to the opinion that ecstasy, in so far as it is not a synonym for joyous and expansive contemplation, is really the name of the outward condition rather than of any one kind of inward experience.

Rapture

In all the cases which we have been considering—and they are characteristic of a large group—the onset of ecstasy has been seen as a gradual, though always involuntary process. Generally it has been the culminating point of a period of contemplation. The self, absorbed in the orison of quiet or of union, or some analogous concentration on its transcendental interests, has passed over the limit of these states; and slid into a still ecstatic trance, with its outward characteristics of rigid limbs, cold, and depressed respiration.

The ecstasy, however, instead of developing naturally from a state of intense absorption in the Divine Vision, may seize the subject abruptly and irresistibly, when in his normal state of consciousness. This is strictly what ascetic writers mean by Rapture. We have seen that the essence of the mystic life consists in the remaking of personality: its entrance into a conscious relation with the Absolute. This process is accompanied in the mystic by the development of an art expressive of his peculiar genius: the art of contemplation. His practice of this art, like the practice of poetry, music, or any other form of creation, may follow normal lines, at first amenable to the control of his will, and always dependent on his own deliberate attention to the supreme Object of his quest; that is to say, on his orison [prayer]. His mystic states, however they may end, will owe their beginning to some voluntary act upon his part: a deliberate response to the invitation of God, a turning from the visible to the invisible world. Sometimes, however, his genius for the transcendent becomes too strong for the other elements of character, and manifests itself in psychic disturbances—abrupt and ungovernable invasions from the subliminal region—which make its exercise parallel to the "fine frenzy" of the prophet, the composer, or the poet. Such is *Rapture*: a violent and uncontrollable expression of genius for the Absolute, which temporarily disorganizes and may permanently injure the nervous system of the self. Often, but not necessarily, Rapture—like

its poetic equivalent—yields results of great splendour and value for life. But it is an accident, not an implicit of mystical experience: an indication of disharmony between the subject's psychophysical make-up and his transcendental powers.

Rapture, then, may accompany the whole development of selves of an appropriate type. We have seen that it is a common incident in mystical conversion. The violent uprush of subliminal intuitions by which such conversion is marked disorganizes the normal consciousness, overpowers the will and the senses, and entails a more or less complete entrancement. This was certainly the case with Suso and Rulman Merswin, and perhaps with Pascal: whose "Certitude, Peace, Joy" sums up the exalted intuition of Perfection and Reality—the conviction of a final and unforgettable knowledge—which is characteristic of all ecstatic perception.

In her Spiritual Relations, St. Teresa speaks in some detail of the different phases or forms of expression of these violent ecstatic states: trance, which in her system means that which we have called ecstasy, and transport, or "flight of the spirit," which is the equivalent of rapture. "The difference between trance and transport," she says, "is this. In a trance the soul gradually dies to outward things, losing the senses and living unto God. But a transport comes on by one sole act of His Majesty, wrought in the innermost part of the soul with such swiftness that it is as if the higher part thereof were carried away, and the soul were leaving the body."[772]

Rapture, says St. Teresa in another place, "comes in general as a shock, quick and sharp, before you can collect your thoughts, or help yourself in any way; and you see and feel it as a cloud, or a strong eagle rising upwards and carrying you away on its wings. I repeat it: you feel and see yourself carried away, you know not whither."[773] This carrying-away sensation may even assume the concrete form which is known as levitation: when the upward and outward sensa-

tions so dominate the conscious field that the subject is convinced that she is raised bodily from the ground. "It seemed to me, when I tried to make some resistance, as if a great force beneath my feet lifted me up. I know of nothing with which to compare it; but it was much more violent than the other spiritual visitations, and I was therefore as one ground to pieces . … And further, I confess that it threw me into a great fear, very great indeed at first; for when I saw my body thus lifted up from the earth, how could I help it? Though the spirit draws it upwards after itself, and that with great sweetness if unresisted, the senses are not lost; *at least I was so much myself as to be able to see that I was being lifted up*."[774]

So Rulman Merswin said that in the rapture which accompanied his conversion, he was carried round the garden with his feet off the ground:[775] and St. Catherine of Siena, in a passage which I have already quoted, speaks of the strength of the spirit, which raises the body from the earth.[776]

The subjective nature of this feeling of levitation is practically acknowledged by St. Teresa when she says, "When the rapture was over, my body seemed frequently to be buoyant, as if all weight had departed from it; so much so, that now and then I scarcely knew that my feet touched the ground. But during the rapture the body is very often as it were dead, perfectly powerless. It continues in the position it was in when the rapture came upon it—if sitting, sitting." Obviously here the outward conditions of physical immobility coexisted with the subjective sensation of being "lifted Up."[777]

The self's consciousness when in the condition of rapture may vary from the complete possession of her faculties claimed by St. Teresa to a complete entrancement. However abrupt the oncoming of the transport, it does not follow that the mystic instantly loses his surface-consciousness. "There remains the power of seeing and hearing; but it is as if the things heard and seen were at a great dis-

tance far away."[778] They have retreated, that is to say, to the fringe of the conscious field, but may still remain just within it. Though the senses may not be entirely entranced, however, it seems that the power of movement is always lost. As in ecstasy, breathing and circulation are much diminished.

"By the command of the Bridegroom when He intends ravishing the soul," says St. Teresa, "the doors of the mansions and even those of the keep and of the whole castle are closed; for He takes away the power of speech, and although occasionally the other faculties are retained rather longer, no word can be uttered. Sometimes the person is at once deprived of all the senses, the hands and body becoming as cold as if the soul had fled; occasionally no breathing can be detected. This condition lasts but a short while, I mean in the same degree, for when this profound suspension diminishes the body seems to come to itself and gain strength to return again to this *death* which gives more vigorous *life* to the soul."[779]

This spiritual storm, then, in St. Teresa's opinion, enhances the vitality of those who experience it: makes them "more living than before." It initiates them into "heavenly secrets," and if it does not do this it is no "true rapture," but a "physical weakness such as women are prone to owing to their delicacy of constitution." Its sharpness and violence, however, leave considerable mental disorder behind: "This supreme state of ecstasy never lasts long, but although it ceases, it leaves the will so inebriated, and the mind so transported out of itself that for a day, or sometimes for several days, such a person is incapable of attending to anything but what excites the will to the love of God; although wide awake enough to this, she seems asleep as regards all earthly matters."[780]

But when equilibrium is re-established, the true effects of this violent and beatific intuition of the Absolute begin to invade the normal life. The self which has thus been caught up to awareness of new

levels of Reality, is stimulated to fresh activity by the strength of its impressions. It now desires an eternal union with that which it has known; with which for a brief moment it seemed to be merged. The peculiar talent of the mystic—power of apprehending Reality which his contemplations have ordered and developed, and his ecstasies express—here reacts upon his life-process, his slow journey from the Many to the One. His nostalgia has been increased by a glimpse of the homeland. His intuitive apprehension of the Absolute, which assumes in ecstasy its most positive form, spurs him on towards that permanent union with the Divine which is his goal. "Such great graces," says St. Teresa, "leave the soul avid of total possession of that Divine Bridegroom who has conferred them."[781]

Hence the ecstatic states do not merely lift the self to an abnormal degree of knowledge: they enrich her life, contribute to the remaking of her consciousness, develop and uphold the "strong and stormy love which drives her home." They give her the clearest vision she can have of that transcendent standard to which she must conform: entail her sharpest consciousness of the inflow of that Life on which her little striving life depends. Little wonder, then, that—though the violence of the onset may often try his body to the full—the mystic comes forth from a "good ecstasy" as Pascal from the experience of the Fire, humbled yet exultant, marvellously strengthened; and ready, not for any passive enjoyments, but rather for the struggles and hardships of the Way, the deliberate pain and sacrifice of love.

In the third Degree of Ardent Love, says Richard of St. Victor, love paralyses action. Union (*copula*) is the symbol of this state: ecstasy is its expression. The desirous soul, he says finely, no longer thirsts *for* God but *into* God. The pull of its desire draws it into the Infinite Sea. The mind is borne away into the abyss of Divine Light; and, wholly forgetful of exterior things, knows not even itself, but passes

utterly into its God. In this state, all earthly desire is absorbed in the heavenly glory. "Whilst the mind is separated from itself, and whilst it is borne away into the secret place of the divine mystery and is surrounded on all sides by the fire of divine love, it is inwardly penetrated and inflamed by this fire, and utterly puts off itself and puts on a divine love: and being conformed to that Beauty which it has beheld, it passes utterly into that other glory."[782]

Thus does the state of ecstasy contribute to the business of deification; of the remaking of the soul's substance in conformity with the Goodness, Truth, and Beauty which is God, "Being conformed to that Beauty which it has beheld, it passes utterly into that other glory"; into the flaming heart of Reality, the deep but dazzling darkness of its home.

Endnotes

[732] "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death," vol. ii. p. 260.
[733] *Vide infra*, p. 365.
[734] An interesting modern case is reported in the *Lancet*, 18 March, 1911.
[735] Relaccion, viii. 8.
[736] St. Thomas proves ecstasies to be inevitable on just this psychological ground. "The higher our mind is raised to the contemplation of spiritual things," he says, "the more it is abstracted from sensible things. But the final term to which contemplation can possibly arrive is the divine substance. Therefore the mind that sees the divine substance must be totally divorced from the bodily senses, either by death or *by some rapture*" ("Sultana contra Gentiles," I. iii. cap. xlvii., Rickaby's translation).
[737] "Sur la Psychologie du Mysticisme" (*Revue Philosophique*, February, 1902).
[738] Malaval, "La Pratique de la Vraye Théologie Mystique," vol. i, p. 89.
[739] Pierre Janet ("The Major Symptoms of Hysteria," p. 316) says that a lowering of the mental level is an invariable symptom or "stigma" of hysteria.
[740] "Holy Wisdom," Treatise iii. § iv. cap. iii.
[741] Von Hügel, "The Mystical Element of Religion," vol. i, p. 206.
[742] This power of detecting and hearing the call of duty, though she was deaf to everything else, is evidently related to the peculiarity noticed by Ribot; who says that an ecstatic hears no sounds, save, in some cases, the voice of one specific person, which is always able to penetrate the trance. ("Les Maladies de la Volonté," p. 125.)
[743] Vita e Dottrina, cap. v.
[744] Vida, cap. xx. § 29.
[745] A. Maury, "Le Sommeil et les Rèves," p. 235.
[746] "Revelations of Divine Love," cap. iii.
[747] *Vide supra*, p. 181.
[748] D. A. Mougel, "Denys le Chartreux," p. 32.
[749] E. Gardner, "St. Catherine of Siena," p. 50.
[750] Dialogo, cap. lxxix.
[751] In the case of Dante, for instance, we do not know whether his absorption in the Eternal light did or did not entail the condition of trance.
[752] 2 Cor. xii. 1-6.
[753] Vida, cap. xx, §§ 1 and 3.
[754] Compare Dante, Letter to Can Grande, sect. 28, where he adduces this fact of "the ravishing of sinners for their correction," in support of his claim that the "Divine Comedy" is the fruit of experience, and that he had indeed "navigated the great Sea of Being" of which he writes.
[755] Richard Rolle, "The Fire of Love," bk. ii, cap. vii.
[756] Dante, *loc. cit.*
[757] Eckhart, "On the Steps of the Soul" (Pfeiffer, p. 153).
[758] Compare Par. xxxiii. 85 (*vide supra*, p. 135).
[759] Jundt, "Rulman Merswin," p. 27. Note that this was a "good ecstasy," involving healthful effects for life.
[760] Jundt, "Les Amis de Dieu," p. 39. Given also by Rufus Jones, "Studies in Mystical Religion," p. 271.
[761] "Benjamin Major."

[762] St. John of the Cross, "En una Noche Escura."
[763] Ribot, "Psychologie de l'Attention," cap. iii.
[764] B. P. Blood. See William James, "A Pluralistic Mystic," in the *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1910.
[765] Vida, cap. xx, § 24.
[766] Leben, cap. vi.
[767] Ennead vi. 9
[768] *Op. cit., loc. cit.*
[769] Ruysbroeck, "De Calculo," cap. xii.
[770] "The activity of the mind is lulled to rest: rapt in God, It can no longer find itself. … Being so deeply engulphed in that ocean, now it can find no place to issue therefrom. Of itself it cannot think, nor can it say what it is like: because transformed, it hath another vesture. All its perceptions have gone forth to gaze upon the Good, and contemplate that Beauty which has no likeness" (Lauda xci.).
[771] "The doors are flung wide: conjoined to God, it possesses all that is in Him. It feels that which it felt not: sees that which it knew not, possesses that which it believed not, tastes, though it savours not. Because it is wholly lost to itself, it possesses that height of Unmeasured Perfection. Because it has not retained in itself the mixture of any other thing, it has received in abundance that Imageless Good" (*op. cit.*).
[772] Relaccion viii. 8 and 10.
[773] Vida, cap. xx. § 3.
[774] St. Teresa, *op. cit., loc. cit.,* §§ 7 and 9.
[775] *Supra*, p. 186.
[776] Dialogo, cap. lxxix.
[777] Vida, cap, xx. § 23. At the same time in the present state of our knowledge and in view of numerous attested cases of levitation, it is impossible to dogmatise on this subject. The supernaturalist view is given in its extreme form by Farges, "Mystical Phenomena," pp. 536 *seq*.
[778] Teresa, *loc. cit.*
[779] St. Teresa, "El Castillo Interior," Moradas Sextas, cap. iv.
[780] *Op. cit., loc. cit.*
[781] St. Teresa, *op. cit.*, cap. vi.
[782] "De Quatuor Gradibus Violentae Charitatis" (paraphrase).

Chapter 23
Daniel Goleman - The Path of Concentration in Buddhist Meditation

Editor: This is an excerpt from Daniel Goleman's book *The Meditative Mind: The Varieties of Meditative Experience* (Los Angeles, CA: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1988, originally published in 1977). Dr. Goleman has a PhD from Harvard in clinical psychology and personality development. He studied in India on fellowships as well. There he became a disciple of the Indian spiritual master Neem Karoli Baba, who was also the guru to another Harvard psychologist, Richard Alpert. Under his influence Alpert became the spiritual teacher Ram Dass, whose speeches and writings have had an enormous impact in America. In 1984 Goleman became a columnist for the *New York Times* where he reported on the brain and behavioral sciences for the next twelve years. In 1995 he published his book *Emotional Intelligence*. It was on the *New York Times* Best Seller list for a year and a half and has been translated into forty languages. After that he co-founded an organization at Yale University's Child Studies Center to spread the teaching of Emotional Intelligence to school systems. It has been highly successful. Thousands of schools around the world have implemented Emotional Intelligence programs. Since 1995 he has written books on emotional intelligence, social intelligence, leadership, and excellence. He has a Career

Achievement Award from the American Psychological Association and was nominated for two Pulitzer Prizes for his journalism at the *Times*. In *The Meditative Mind*, his first book, he surveyed different systems of meditation. In 2017 he returned to the topic of meditation with his book *Altered Traits: Science Reveals How Meditation Changes Your Mind, Brain, and Body*.

The section of *The Meditative Mind* that we are concerned with deals with the *Visuddhimagga*, a textbook of Buddhist meditation that was formalized in the fifth century AD. For centuries aspiring Buddhist monks memorized it verbatim. Goleman calls it a map for inner space. Our excerpt from *The Meditative Mind* is on the subject of the Path of Concentration. The *Visuddhimagga* says there are forty subjects suitable for concentrative meditation. Some subjects are better for different personality types and some subjects are better for reaching different stages of meditation.

> Ten *kasinas*, colored wheels about a foot in circumference: earth, water, fire, air, dark blue, yellow, blood-red, white, light, bounded space.
>
> Ten *asubhas*, loathsome, decaying corpses: for example, a bloated corpse, a gnawed corpse, a worm-infected corpse, etc., including a skeleton.
>
> Ten reflections: on the attributes of the Buddha, the Doctrine, the sangha, peace, one's own purity, one's own liberality, one's possession of godly qualities or on the inevitability of death; contemplation on the thirty-two parts of the body or on in-and-out breathing.
>
> Four sublime states: loving-kindness, compassion, joy in the joy of others, and equanimity.

Four formless contemplations: of infinite space, infinite consciousness, the realm of nothingness, and the realm of "neither perception nor non perception"; the loathsomeness of food.

The four physical elements: earth, air, fire, water as abstract forces (i.e., extension, motility, heat, cohesion).

Daniel Goleman

In describing the path of concentration, the Visuddhimagga map suffers from a serious oversight: It begins with the description of an advanced altered state, one that many or most meditators may never once experience. It skips the ordinary—and much more common—preliminary stages. This gap can be filled from other Buddhist sources, which start with the meditator's normal state of mind rather than with the rarefied states the Visuddhimagga elaborates in detail.

At the outset, the meditator's focus wanders from the object of meditation. As he notices he has wandered, he returns his awareness to the proper focus. His one-pointedness is occasional, coming in fits and starts. His mind oscillates between the object of meditation and distracting thoughts, feelings, and sensations. The first landmark in concentration comes when the meditator's mind is unaffected both by outer distractions, such as nearby sounds, and by the turbulence of his own assorted thoughts and feelings. Although sounds are heard, and his thoughts and feelings are noticed, they do not disturb the meditator.

In the next stage, his mind focuses on the object for prolonged periods. The meditator gets better at repeatedly returning his wandering mind to the object. His ability to return his attention gradually increases as the meditator sees the ill results of distractions (e.g., agitation) and feels the advantages of a calm one-pointedness. As

this happens, the meditator is able to overcome mental habits antagonistic to calm collectedness, such as boredom due to hunger for novelty. By now, the meditator's mind can remain undistracted for long periods.

On the Verge of Absorption

In the early stages of meditation, there is a tension between concentration on the object of meditation and distracting thoughts. The main distractions are sensual desires; ill will, despair, and anger; laziness and torpor; agitation and worry; and doubt and skepticism. With much practice, a moment comes when these hindrances are wholly subdued. There is then a noticeable quickening of concentration. At this moment, the mental attributes, such as one-pointedness and bliss, that will mature into full absorption simultaneously come into dominance. Each has been present previously to different degrees, but when they come, all at once they have special power. This is the first noteworthy attainment in concentrative meditation; because it is the state verging on full absorption, it is called "access" concentration.

This state of concentration is like a child not yet able to stand steady but always trying to do so. The mental factors of full absorption are not strong at the access level; their emergence is precarious, and the mind fluctuates between them and its inner speech, the usual ruminations and wandering thoughts. The meditator is still open to his senses and remains aware of surrounding noises and his body's feelings. The meditation subject is a dominant thought but does not yet fully occupy the mind. At this access level, strong feelings of zest or rapture emerge, along with happiness, pleasure, and equanimity. There is also fleeting attention to the meditation subject as though striking at it, or more sustained focus on it, repeatedly noting it. Sometimes there are luminous shapes or flashes of bright light, especially if the meditation subject is a kasina or respiration. There may also be a sensation of lightness, as though the body were floating in the air. Access

concentration is a precarious attainment. If not solidified into fuller absorption at the same sitting, it must be protected between sessions by avoiding distracting actions or encounters.

Visions

Visionary experiences can occur on the threshold of this level when factors such as rapture have ripened but discursive thought continues, and so long as sustained focus on the object of concentration remains weak. Were sustained concentration to achieve full strength, mental processes necessary for visions would be cut short as long as attention remains with the primary object. Access and deeper levels of absorption are for this reason antithetical to visions, but as the access level is approached (or on emerging from deeper absorption), visions are most likely. Visions can be frightening—an image of oneself as a corpse, for example, or the form of a threatening and terrifying beast—or quite benign, such as the figure of a benevolent deity or a Buddha. Meditative visions are quite vivid; the Visuddhimagga says they are as realistic as talking to a guest who comes on a visit. Timid or anxious persons who have a terrifying vision, it is warned, can be driven mad. Another danger to the meditator is becoming enraptured by beatific visions and so halting further progress by making them the goal of one's meditation, failing to further strengthen concentration. The meditator's goal is beyond visions. In Zen, they say, "If you meet the Buddha, slay him."

Full Absorptions or Jhana

By continually focusing on the object of meditation, there comes the first moment marking a total break with normal consciousness. This is full absorption, or *jhana*. The mind suddenly seems to sink into the object and remains fixed in it. Hindering thoughts cease totally. There is neither sensory perception nor the usual awareness of one's body; bodily pain cannot be felt. Apart from the initial and sustained atten-

tion to the primary object, consciousness is dominated by rapture, bliss, and one-pointedness. These are the mental factors that, when in simultaneous ascendance, constitute jhana.

There is a subtle distinction between rapture and bliss. Rapture at the level of the first jhana is likened to the initial pleasure and excitement of getting a long-sought object; bliss is the enjoyment of that object. Rapture may be experienced as raising of the hairs on the body, as momentary joy that flashes and disappears like lightning, as waves showering through the body again and again, as the sensation of levitation, or as immersion in thrilling happiness. Bliss is a more subdued state of continued ecstasy. One-pointedness is the property of mind that centers it in the jhanic state. The first taste of jhana lasts but a single moment, but with continued efforts, the jhanic state can be held for longer and longer intervals. Until the jhana is mastered, it is unstable and can be easily lost. Full mastery comes when the meditator can attain jhana whenever, wherever, as soon as, and for as long as he wishes.

Deeper Jhanas

In the course of meditation, one-pointedness becomes more and more intensified by the successive elimination of the jhanic factors. One-pointedness absorbs the energy invested in the other factors at each deeper jhanic level (Fig. 1). Becoming even more one-pointed after mastery of the first jhana requires eliminating initial and repeated returning of the mind to the meditation object. After emerging from the jhanic state, these attentional processes seem gross in comparison to the other more subtle mental factors of jhana. Just as the hindrances were overcome on the way to the access level, and just as thoughts were stilled in attaining the first jhana, initial and repeated attention to the primary object are abandoned at the threshold of the second jhana. To go beyond these kinds of attention, the meditator enters the first jhana by focusing on the primary object.

But then he frees the mind of any thought of the object by instead turning the mind toward rapture, bliss, and one-pointedness. This level of absorption is more subtle and stable than the first. The meditator's mind is now totally free of any verbal thoughts, even that of the original primary object. Only a reflected image of the object remains as the focus of one-pointedness.

Figure 1. Landmarks on the Path of Concentration

HIGH	
Formless states	
8th jhana	**Neither perception nor nonperception. Equanimity and one-pointedness.**
7th jhana	**Awareness of no-thing-ness, equanimity and one-pointedness.**
6th jhana	**Objectless infinite consciousness, equanimity and one-pointedness**
5th jhana	**Consciousness of infinite space, equanimity and one-pointedness.**
Material states	
4th jhana	**Equanimity and one-pointedness, bliss. All feelings of bodily pleasure cease.**
3rd jhana	**Feelings of bliss, one-pointedness, and equanimity. Rapture ceases.**
2nd jhana	**Feelings of rapture, bliss, one-pointedness. No thought of primary object of concentration.**
1st jhana	**Hindering thoughts, sensory perception, and awareness of painful bodily states all cease. Initial and unbroken sustained attention to primary object of concentration, feelings of rapture, bliss, and one-pointedness.**
Access	**Hindering thoughts overcome, other thoughts remain. Awareness of sensory inputs and body states. Primary object of concentration dominates thought. Feelings of rapture, happiness, equanimity, initial and sustained thoughts of primary object. Flashes of light or bodily lightness.**
LOW	

Third Jhana

To go still deeper, the meditator masters the second jhana as he did the first. Then, when he emerges from the second jhana, he sees that rapture—a form of excitement—is gross compared to bliss and one-pointedness. He attains the third level of jhana by again contemplating the primary object and abandoning first thoughts of the object, then rapture. In the third level of absorption, there is a feeling of equanimity toward even the highest rapture. This even-mindedness emerges with the fading away of rapture. This jhana is extremely subtle, and without this newly emergent equanimity, the meditator's mind would be pulled back to rapture. If he stays in the third jhana, an exceedingly sweet bliss fills the meditator, and afterward this bliss floods his body. Because the bliss of this level is accompanied by equanimity, the meditator's mind is kept one-pointed in these subtle dimensions, resisting the pull of a grosser rapture. Having mastered the third jhana as those before, the meditator can go deeper if he sees that bliss is more disturbing than one-pointedness and equanimity.

Fourth Jhana

To go deeper still, the meditator has to abandon all forms of mental pleasure. He has to give up all those mental states that might oppose more total stillness, even bliss and rapture. With the total cessation of bliss, equanimity and one-pointedness gain their full strength. In the fourth jhana, feelings of bodily pleasure are fully abandoned; feelings of pain ceased at the first jhana. There is not a single sensation or thought. The meditator's mind at this extremely subtle level rests with one-pointedness in equanimity. Just as his mind becomes progressively more still at each level of absorption, his breath becomes calmer. At this fourth level, the meditator's breath is so still he cannot sense the least stirring; he perceives his breath as ceasing altogether.

Formless Jhana

The next step in concentration culminates in the four states called "formless." The first four jhanas are attained by concentration on a material form or some concept derived therefrom. But the meditator attains the formless states by passing beyond all perception of form. To enter the first four jhanas, the meditator had to empty his mind of mental factors. To enter each successive formless jhana, the meditator substitutes progressively more subtle objects of concentration. All the formless jhanas share the mental factors of one-pointedness and equanimity, but at each level these factors are more refined. Concentration approaches imperturbability. The meditator cannot be disturbed but emerges after a self-determined time limit set before entering this state.

Fifth Jhana

The meditator reaches the first formless absorption and the fifth jhana by entering the fourth jhana through any of the kasinas. Mentally extending the limits of the kasina to the largest extent imaginable, his attention is then turned away from the colored light of the kasina and toward the infinite space occupied by it. The meditator's mind now abides in a sphere in which all perceptions of form have ceased. With the full maturity of equanimity and one-pointedness, his mind is so firmly set in this sublime consciousness that nothing can disrupt it. Still, the barest trace of the senses exists in the fifth jhana, though they are ignored. The absorption would be broken should the meditator turn his attention to them.

Once the fifth jhana is mastered, the meditator goes still deeper by first achieving an awareness of infinite space and then turning his attention to that infinite awareness. In this way, the thought of infinite space is abandoned, while objectless infinite aware-

ness remains. This marks the sixth jhana. Having mastered the sixth, the meditator obtains the seventh jhana by first entering the sixth and then turning his awareness to the nonexistence of infinite consciousness. Thus, the seventh jhana is absorption with no-thing-ness, or the void, as its object. That is, the meditator's mind takes as its object the awareness of absence of any object.

Mastering this seventh jhana, the meditator can then review it and find any perception at all a disadvantage, its absence being more sublime. So motivated, the meditator attains the eighth jhana by first entering the seventh. He then turns his attention to the aspect of peacefulness and away from perception of the void. The delicacy of this is suggested by the stipulation that there must be no hint of desire to attain this peacefulness or to avoid perception of no-thing-ness. Attending to the peacefulness, he reaches an ultrasubtle state in which there are only residual mental processes. There is no gross perception here at all: This is a state of "no perception." There is ultrasubtle perception: thus, "not nonperception." The eighth jhana, therefore, is called the "sphere of neither perception nor nonperception." No mental states are decisively present: Their residuals remain, though they are nearly absent. This state approaches the ultimate limits of perception. As with mind, so with body; the meditator's metabolism becomes progressively stiller through the formless jhanas. "The eighth jhana," says one commentator, "is a state so extremely subtle that it cannot be said whether it is or is not."

Each jhana rests on the one below. In entering any jhana, the meditator's mind traverses upward each level in succession by eliminating the gross elements of each one by one. With practice, the traversal of jhanic levels becomes almost instantaneous, the meditator's awareness pausing at each level on the way for but a few moments of consciousness. As grosser mental factors are elim-

inated, concentration intensifies. The grossness of a meditation subject limits the depth of jhana the meditator can reach through it. The simpler the subject, the deeper the jhana (Table 1).

Table 1
Jhana Level Attainable According to Meditation Subject

Meditation Subject	Highest Jhana Level Attainable
Reflections; elements; loathsomeness of food	Access
Body parts; corpses	First
Loving-kindness; selfless joy; compassion	Third
Equanimity	Fourth
Infinite space	Fifth
Infinite consciousness	Sixth
No-thing-ness	Seventh
Kasinas; mindfulness of breath; neither perception nor nonperception	Eighth

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Editor: Quotes from Goleman's descriptions of the Jhana states are listed below. They are followed by relatively equivalent experiences from my phenomenological map of trance depth. The phenomenological map divides trance depth into six levels:

Unitive
Visionary
Profound
Deep
Medium
Light

Access state: "Meditative visions are quite vivid; the Visuddhimagga says they are as realistic as talking to a guest who comes on a visit."

Visionary Trance: Totally real hallucinations involving all the senses. Feelings of being in a different reality. (See my article on Waking Reality Illusions.)

1st Jhana: "The mind suddenly seems to sink into the object and remains fixed in it. Hindering thoughts cease totally. There is neither sensory perception nor the usual awareness of one's body; bodily pain cannot be felt."

Visionary Trance: Complete loss of touch with the external environment.
Profound Trance: Loss of touch with the body.
Deep Trance: Unresponsive, euphoric, spontaneous catalepsy and anesthesia

2nd Jhana: "But then he frees the mind of any thought of the object by instead turning the mind toward rapture, bliss, and one-pointedness. This level of absorption is more subtle and stable than the first. The meditator's mind is now totally free of any verbal thoughts, even that of the original primary object. Only a reflected image of the object remains as the focus of one-pointedness."

Unitive Trance: Absolute mental quiet, no thoughts or images.
Unitive Trance: Feelings of joy and extreme happiness. Feelings of awe and wonder.

4th Jhana: "In the fourth jhana, feelings of bodily pleasure are fully abandoned; feelings of pain ceased at the first jhana. There is not a single sensation or thought."

Profound Trance: Loss of touch with the body.
Unitive Trance: Absolute mental quiet, no thoughts or images.

5th Jhana: "Mentally extending the limits of the kasina to the largest extent imaginable, his attention is then turned away from the colored light of the kasina and toward the infinite space occupied by it. … awareness of infinite space …"

Profound Trance: Sensation of the body floating in an infinite expanse.

7th Jhanna: "Thus, the seventh jhana is absorption with no-thingness, or the void, as its object. That is, the meditator's mind takes as its object the awareness of absence of any object."

Unitive trance: Voidness, absolute mental quiet, no thoughts or images.

Given these parallels it looks like trance depth plays a part in Buddhist concentrative meditation. A knowledge of trance capacity and methods for achieving trance depth might considerably shorten the journey to enlightenment.

Phenomena from the trance-depth map do not necessarily match the jhana levels. Even though they are there in the jhanas, they can range over deep, profound, visionary, and unitive trance for any given jhana. I attribute this to expectation. The Buddhist monk has memorized the *Visuddhimagga*. He has internalized a road map to enlightenment and trance phenomena appear where he expects them.

Chapter 24
Trance and Hasidic Prayer

In the 1700s in Poland and the Ukraine, the Jewish population living in small villages had been beaten into despair by poverty and pogroms. Their religion wasn't of much use to them since it was in the hands of academic specialists in Jewish law, who taught that in order to be holy they had to be educated in the sacred writings, and in order to acquire God's blessing they needed to repent and carry out God's commandments even more strictly than they were already doing. The miracle-working Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (circa 1700–1760), better known as the Ba'al Shem Tov, the Master of the Good Name, completely revolutionized this situation by bringing techniques of mystical prayer to the uneducated religious people living in the Jewish villages scattered throughout the region. This was the beginning of Hasidic Judaism.

In this paper I am first going to outline the nature of Hasidic mystical prayer and then I am going to show how it is a form of trance with some of the same features that appear in psychological experiments on very deep hypnosis. Keep in mind that we are dealing in this article with prayer as taught and practiced by the Ba'al Shem Tov and his immediate disciples. Later Hasidism is another story. I am relying on Arthur Green and Barry W. Holtz's book *Your Word is Fire: The Hasidic Masters on Contemplative*

Prayer, a collection of teachings from the early masters, for my understanding of Hasidic prayer. The descriptions given here are my own expressive interpretations of much more detailed material found in *Your Word is Fire*. Depending on your point of view about the nature of the universe, you can see Hasidic prayer as a method for achieving psychological ecstasy or as actual contact with a spiritual reality. My own belief is that there is a spiritual reality that overlays the physical world. Scientific materialism ignores vast tracts of evidence from the lives of the saints, parapsychological research, and spontaneous psychic events that occur to ordinary people. However, even if you are committed to scientific materialism, you can still be fascinated by how the Ba'al Shem Tov turned despair into ecstasy.

Here are Green and Holtz on the shaking and the ecstasy that occurred in the prayer groups of the early Hasidim:

> The Ba'al Shem Tov was said to tremble so greatly in his prayer that bits of grain in a nearby barrel were seen to join him in his trembling. A disciple who touched the master's prayer-garment was so seized with tremors that he had to pray for release. One of the followers was so overcome by ecstasy while preparing for prayer in the ritual bath that he ran from the bathhouse to the adjoining synagogue and danced on the tables without realizing that he was not fully dressed. Strange and seemingly inhuman noises, violent movements of the body, even the turning of cartwheels before the Torah, all characterized the devotional climate of some early Hasidic groups. The masters themselves sometimes felt called upon to restore the values of inwardness and silence to a world where unbridled mystical ecstasy was coming to be the order of the day.

How did the Master of the Good Name change despair into mystical ecstasy?

In reading the description you can note that the Ba'al Shem Tov encouraged people to be physically out of control. When God and ecstasy are encountered in prayer the body shakes from the influx of power, violent movements may occur, and strange sounds come out of the mouth. The person may be moved to ecstatic dancing or even to turning cartwheels. A young man that I know had a mystical experience. He told me that he danced in joy for six hours during the encounter. Shaking from the influx of spiritual power is found in many cultures. Bradford Keeney in his book *Shaking Medicine: The Healing Power of Ecstatic Movemen*t outlines its history among the Kalahari Bushmen, English Quakers, American Shakers, Japanese practitioners of Seiki Jutsu, Christian disciples who experience the power of the Holy Spirit, and Hindu devotees of Kundalini Shakti. Being receptive to the influx of spiritual power, wanting it to happen, expecting it to happen – these are all part of opening oneself to the Divine. It is less of a mystery if you remember that when people are happy they often whistle or sing or do a little dance. The body responds to the emotion. In Hasidic prayer the emotion can be enormously magnified. If the emotion is missing, but the physical manifestations still occur, then you are looking at a counterfeit spirituality produced by suggestion and rote learning, or you are looking at someone who is warming up to return to the ecstatic state.

The early Hasidim valued the word spoken with wholeness of heart above any rote prayer or prayer full of esoteric knowledge. God could hear the simple prayers of the common people spoken with a broken heart far more than he could hear the emotionless recitations of educated rabbis. When the heart is broken, you can encounter God in prayer and move to a heart that is aflame, filled with intense joy, awe before God, and love of God.

The Ba'al Shem taught that God is present in all of human life: "All things and all moments are vessels that contain the Presence." God creates all things anew every moment of every day, both the good and the evil. Many people would see this as an indictment. How can a good God create so much evil in the world? The Ba'al Shem saw it as a way to return to God even when we are in the grip of despair. If God is present in our most vile impulses, if he exists in all the horrors we face, then it is possible to move beyond the surface and find the Presence that lives in the depths.

The idea that all things and all moments contain the Presence means that human beings contain the Presence, too. The human soul is a part of God. It is possible to move beyond the surface experience of the self and find the Presence that lives in your own depths. In prayer the spark of God within comes face-to-face with the Divine Presence without. This is the unification of the separated parts of God. The divine part of us longs for reunification with the Source. Real prayer begins when you realize that you too contain the Presence. Then beauty can speak to beauty.

How do you go beyond the surface to find the Presence? In Judaism God speaks in order to create the world. Words are made up of letters. The letters of the holy alphabet are seen as mystical powers, each containing a portion of the Light of creation. When you pray, every word that you speak is made up of letters that contain holy power, divine light, and a direct connection to God. You can pray deeply by entering into the letters until you see the light of creation in them. When you join the letters to create words, the lights in them merge, new lights are born, and your prayer rises up to God.

Use all your strength to enter into each letter. You can enter into the letters with such concentration that your sense of having a body disappears. Every word you speak is a name of God that rises to heaven on the burning desire of your heart. The breath of your lips rises and

God's breath descends. The two parts of God are merged and return to unification. All worlds were created through the letters. When you pray, you too are using the letters to create, and all of creation, the play of the letters, joins with you in prayer. When you are unified with God, your prayer is part of the constant flow of creation.

There are two levels of Hasidic prayer, *katnut* and *gadlut*, prayer in ordinary consciousness and prayer in mystical consciousness. Prayer starts in an ordinary devotional way with heartfelt words, surrender to the will of God, and the experience of love and awe, but no transformation of consciousness. In mystical consciousness, perception of the body ceases, awareness ascends into heaven, time stops, the self disappears, and there is union with eternal oneness.

All of these features of mystical consciousness have been found in psychological experiments that explore the deepest levels of hypnotic trance. There are six scientific research studies that show that people who go far enough into deep trance reach states similar to those reported by mystics and saints. The six studies are:

- Milton Erickson's case study of the author Aldous Huxley (1965)
- Charles Tart's case study of a person with profound trance capabilities (1970)
- Ernest Hilgard's exploratory study of several subjects with moderately high trance capabilities (1977)
- Spencer Sherman's study of ten excellent hypnotic subjects (1971)
- Brian Feldman's study of another ten excellent hypnotic subjects (1976)
- Etzel Cardeña's study of twelve hypnotic virtuosi (2009)

Two of these studies – the one by Spencer Sherman and the one by Brian Feldman – show the distribution of trance experiences over the entire range of trance depth. I have constructed a phenomenological map of trance depth using Sherman's data as a backbone with experiences from the other studies placed where I think they belong. My map of trance depth is divided into six regions:

Light Trance
Medium Trance
Deep Trance (Somnambulism)
Profound Trance
Visionary Trance
Unitive Trance

Your Word is Fire - Page 46
Put all your strength into the words,
proceeding from letter to letter
with such concentration
that you lose awareness of your
bodily self.

Profound Trance: losing awareness of your bodily self

- Sherman - Loss of touch with body
- Tart - Body just a thing left behind
- Hilgard - A loss of any connection with the body
- Feldman - Numbness in body
- Feldman - Loss of bodily sensations

Your Word is Fire - Page 67
But when you serve in *gadlut*, "the
greater service,"

you take hold of yourself with all
your strength
and your mind soars upward,
breaking through the heavens all
at once,
rising higher,
higher than the angels.

Your Word is Fire - Page 132
There are times when you are
not at prayer,
but nevertheless you can feel
close to God.
Your mind can ascend even above
the heavens.

Deep Trance: Sense of ascending

- Sherman — Feeling of floating
- Feldman — Sensation of upward movement, flying
- Cardeña — Floating, flying, mind leaving the body

Your Word is Fire - Page 59
You must forget yourself in prayer.
Think of yourself as nothing
and pray only for the sake of God.
In such prayer you may come to
transcend time,
entering the highest realms
of the World of Thought.
There all things are as one;
distinctions between "life" and "death,"
"land" and "sea,"

have lost their meaning.
But none of this can happen
as long as you remain attached
to the reality of the material
world.
Here you are bound to the distinctions
between good and evil
that emerge only in the lower
realms of God.
How can one who remains attached to his own self
go beyond time to the world
where all is one?

Profound Trance: Beyond time

- Sherman — No sense of time
- Tart — Time becomes meaningless
- Hilgard — A failure of time to have any meaning
- Cardeña — Time slows down, no sense of time, time becomes still

Unitive Trance: Letting go of the self, being nothing.

- Sherman — Loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego"
- Cardeña — Loss of identity

Unitive Trance: All is one

- Sherman — Being everything, feeling oneness with everything
- Hilgard — A sense of oneness
- Cardeña — Being one with everything, greater relatedness
- Feldman — Feeling of oneness with surroundings

Having examined the mystical features of *gadlut* consciousness in the light of trance research, let us examine some of the other features of Hasidic prayer, asking ourselves how they might facilitate entry into very deep levels of trance.

A broken heart: Starting from fear, grief, frustration, and rage means that you have immediately gone beyond the intellectual abstractions of rational prayer to the emotional core of authentic living. As you change from negative to positive feelings, intense feelings of love, beauty, and joy become available in the authentic core. Escaping the driving force of painful emotions is a powerful motivation as you move in prayer to experience profound bliss.

Intensity: There are many calls to pray with great intensity in *Your Word is Fire*. To me this word means to pray with focus, attention, concentration, incredible will, and tremendous emotional need. You should be so motivated that you are almost ready to die to make your prayer a success. Trance is often referred to as a form of absorption, of intense involvement with a subject, to the point of suspending certain perceptions of reality. You can see this kind of trance effect in the loss of bodily awareness quote: "Put all your strength into the words, proceeding from letter to letter with such concentration that you lose awareness of your bodily self." In the deep absorption of profound trance, awareness of the body is lost.

Letters of light: This technique is really quite wonderful. The rational-analytic side of the brain is reconciled and balanced with the visual-emotional side of the brain. Prayer consists of letters, words, and meanings. When you enter into a letter to experience its light, you are seeing in your mind's eye how it is an expression of the creative power of the divine glory. The light stretches back to the image of God which is also the name of God and the glory of God on the throne and the radiant void beyond the image. The

powers of the letters of light join into words and the words into meanings to express the creation of the reality around us. Experiencing each letter in this way brings prayer to a slow crawl. In my article on Tapping Meditation I show how reducing the speed of words to a slow crawl can cause entrance into a trance state between waking and dreaming, a state where the subject/object differentiation begins to break down and there is a sense of union with the object of your concentration. Everything is a creation of God. Every horror within and every horror without is an emanation of the Divine. Using the letters of light we can move from words expressing our despair to a heart aflame with joy.

As we begin to touch the divine light within our prayer, ripples of movement appear in the body. Jerking, shaking, or producing strange sounds may occur. Small waves of bliss usually accompany these movements. Being open to the movements, expecting them to happen, wanting them to happen, transports us into the trance state. The movements and the emotions function to confirm that something spiritual is happening, acting as signals for the deepening of the trance process. Psychological functioning shifts from conscious intention to non-conscious expression. One begins to feel taken over by the divine Presence, the *shekinah*, in a form of possession trance. Movements of the body slowly cease as perception of the body disappears, awareness ascends into heaven, time stops, the self dissolves, and there is union with eternal oneness.

Hypnotic trance is usually induced by means of deep relaxation and hence the usual idea of hypnosis that people have is that it is a state of near sleep. This is a misperception, however. In the state of deep hypnosis called somnambulism the subject can be up and aware, performing ordinary actions, and still remain in trance. Milton Erickson used to have a subject lecture to a class while in the trance state and then challenge the class to figure out whether

the lecturer was in a trance or not. In Etzel Cardeña's experiment with twelve hypnotic virtuosi mentioned above, subjects were able to reach very deep hypnosis while riding a stationary bicycle. Almost anything can be used as a cue for producing trance as long as it has been defined as such a cue.

Seeing the letters, entering into the letters to encounter the divine light, movements of the body, waves of ecstasy – all of these are cues to go deeper and deeper into the trance where it is possible to transcend the body, experience heaven, stop time, dissolve the self, and achieve union with the One.

It is hard to accept the Ba'al Shem Tov's teaching that God creates everything, all the evil along with the good. How can a good God create so much suffering? If you come to know God in prayer, if you experience all the beauty and the bliss, it becomes harder and harder to blame God for any of it. Do I blame the rose for its thorns? Even though I don't know the reason for the existence of evil, it is an integral part of the beautiful whole.

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Part Four

Basic Studies on Trance and Spiritual Experience

Introduction to Part Four

There are two articles from the six basic studies that are not reprinted here. They are available online either for free or for a small amount of money.

Milton H. Erickson, M.D. "A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley into the Nature and Character of Various States of Consciousness," *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis,* 8:1 (1965), 14–33.

> The special inquiry with Aldous Huxley is available online through Scribd, a digital library of over one million books. It is in *The Collected Papers of Milton H. Erickson on Hypnosis,* Vol. 1, The Nature of Hypnosis and Suggestion, 83–108. (Scribd.com requires a subscription of about $10 a month as of this writing.)
>
> It can also be found in Charles Tart, ed., *Altered States of Consciousness: A Book of Readings* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969), 45–71.
>
> You can find it online for free at https://itsjustmyron.tumblr.com/post/185259412530/a-special-inquiry-with-aldous-huxley-into-the.

For an interesting article on hypnosis and Aldous Huxley, see James Whitlark, "Hypnosis and Awareness Expansion: The Case of Aldous Huxley," *Hypnogenesis Online Journal of Hypnosis & Hypnotherapy*, https://www.hypnos.co.uk/whitlark-awareness.html.

Etzel Cardeña, "The Phenomenology of Deep Hypnosis: Quiescent and Physically Active," *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 53:1 (2005), 37–59.

This article is fully accessible for free at Researchgate.net and at Academia.edu.

Chapter 25
Charles Tart - Transpersonal Potentialities of Deep Hypnosis

Editor: This is an excerpt from Charles T. Tart, "Transpersonal Potentialities of Deep Hypnosis," *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 2, no. 1 (1970). It is a transcription from a Conference presentation.

Charles T. Tart

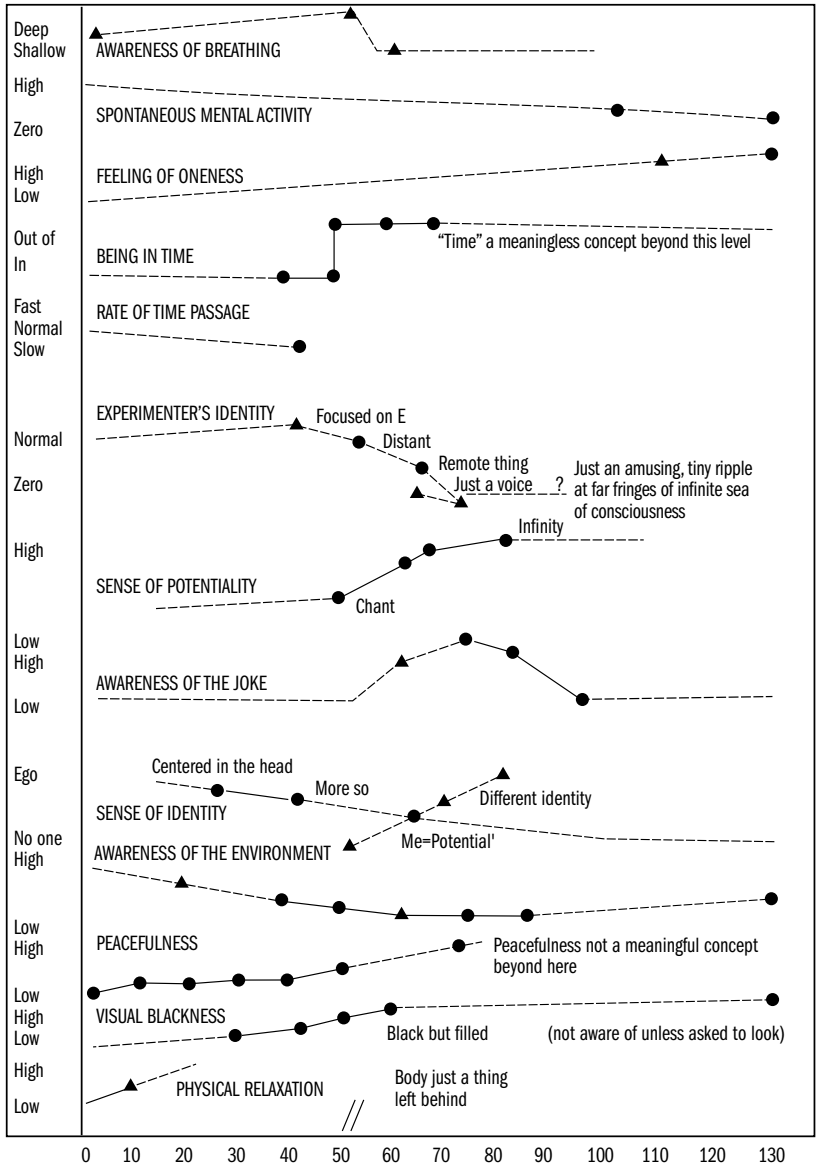
… There's a great failure to recognize that hypnosis is one of the most flexible states of consciousness known. The subject is extremely sensitive to what you expect from him. So, if you have a theory of hypnosis, you can pretty well prove it on your subjects because they'll pick it up and do the right thing. If you're a psychoanalyst, you can always find "regression in the service of the ego" and "primary drives" coming out in hypnosis. If you don't believe in that, you may never see that sort of thing in your laboratory. So, it's too easy to prove particular theories without realizing that basically you have a very flexible kind of state of consciousness. And, although there's a lot of lip service to a more permissive kind of approach – you know, "I'm here to help you with experiences" and so forth – the old authoritarian game is still there fairly heavily because basically "I'm the professor and you're the student. And you don't know what you're doing, kid, so now we'll do the experiment my way" and so forth. There are emerging trends in

hypnosis, though, which I think are going to make the whole thing a more humanistic sort of experience and a more transcendental kind of experience. What I want to do to illustrate this is show a single slide of some research I've been doing that shows how hypnosis can move into a kind of transcendental area. This results from some very intensive work with a single subject that I've been working with for over a year. I might add that this is a particularly gifted subject; you can't expect this from just anyone.

The kind of climate I create in my laboratory for hypnosis is basically, "Look, I do know more than you, but I'm not an authority in the sense that I can program your every bit of behavior. I'm more a guide when it comes to hypnosis. I know how to do certain things that are going to change the state of your mind, but unless you constantly tell me where you're at I'm in the dark; I'm just pushing my line of things." So, this is a subject who's quite verbal in telling me what's going on and making suggestions as to how to continue to go about things and so forth, and who's been able to reach some extremely profound states of hypnosis. This guy has also done some meditation on his own and had some psychedelic drug trips in the past, so he has a vocabulary for talking about the sorts of things that happen. I should also explain that hypnosis has a dimension you might call depth or profundity. Subjects in my lab have been taught in this kind of permissive relationship to scale the depth of their hypnotic state and do it kind of intuitively.[1] You don't say, "Now think about all of the things you're experiencing and come up with some complex intellectual concept to describe it," but rather, "Some part of your mind kind of knows where you're at at every moment. Give me an intuitive answer." I won't go into that in detail, but this sort of turns out to be a beautiful kind of way of figuring out where people are at in hypnosis; it relates to all sorts of other things they do.

[1]Charles T. Tart, "Self-report Scales of Hypnotic Depth," *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* 18 (1970): 105–25.

FIGURE 1.
The relationship of the intensity of various experiences to self-reported hypnotic depth.
(Values marked with a triangle (▲) were obtained in the interview before the hypnotic session; values marked with a circle (●), during the hypnotic session.)



Now, this is a subject who goes extremely deep, and I'm just briefly going to describe some of the sorts of things he experiences to show you, I think, where hypnosis can go and how it can lead into this area that I think could best be described as sort of a transcendental level of hypnosis.

Ordinary hypnosis on this kind of scale would be the region of zero to about 25 on the horizontal axis [Fig. 1]; as you go down to 30 or 40 on the depth scale, that would be called deep hypnosis. When you get down to about 50, that's usually been called extremely profound hypnosis, and, by and large, you don't get any reports from people of what goes on there, which I think is largely a function of the fact that Westerners don't have the vocabulary to talk about what's going on. This fellow has an exceptionally good vocabulary.

I would ask him about his many experiences in hypnosis in various projects in my laboratory (plotted with triangles on the chart) and also run him into some very deep hypnosis (plotted with circle). I'd tell him to go deeper and tell me what was going on and ask him about these various things, like "Do you have more or less of that last thing you were experiencing? What's happening with it?" This is an attempt to plot the inner relationships of all these various sorts of things that were going on.

The first thing plotted at the bottom of the chart is physical relaxation. You can see that this steadily gets higher, except that by the time you get to about 20 on this scale his body feels absolutely relaxed and after that he says "No, I can't tell you how relaxed I am because my body has reached its limit. It's absolutely relaxed." And in point of fact, by the time you get down to the level of about 50, notice it's not "my body" but "This body is just a thing that's not really of any importance. How can I tell you how relaxed it is? It's not that important."

I ask him what he's seeing. At the very beginning he sees a little light and it starts getting blacker. As he goes deeper he sees more and more blackness until he reaches a point, very early, where it's absolutely black – his eyes are closed, of course. Then it continues to get blacker as he goes deeper and deeper into hypnosis but it's a funny kind of blackness. It's a blackness that's "filled," which sounds like a paradoxical statement, but I think some of you who have had psychedelics will realize the kind of thing he's talking about. There are no definite shapes, but it's a blackness that seems full somehow. This kind of plateaus off at around 60 on this scale so that this blackness is simply totally filled but it's absolutely black.

The third line plots feeling of peacefulness. He doesn't feel terribly peaceful when he first starts out in hypnosis, but this fairly rapidly goes up and by the time he gets to around 70 once again peacefulness is no longer a meaningful concept. As you'll see later his whole sense of identity is changed. You know, "I can talk about me being peaceful, but if I don't feel me anymore how can I talk about whether me is peaceful or not peaceful," or something like that.

His awareness of what's going on around him, the environment, starts out at a normal level; he hears the noises in the hall outside and so forth. It fairly rapidly decreases and, once again, around 50 it reaches a low. As far as he's concerned he might be in the world's best sensory deprivation chamber. There is no physical world environment. He can hear my voice but there's absolutely nothing going on otherwise.

I asked him about his sense of identity at various points. "Who are you?" "What's your identity?" That sort of thing. He starts out as himself, ego, and then his sense of identity tends to become less distributed through his body and more just in his head; just sort of a thinking part. And that becomes a little more so and then that begins a kind of dropping out until his ordinary identity – let's call him John

Smith – steadily decreases and as he goes deeper into hypnosis John Smith no longer exists. But there is a change taking place in who he is. He becomes more and more identified with a new identity, and that identity is *potential*. He's not anybody in particular; he's potential. He could be this, he could be that. He's aware of identifying with this flux of potentiality that could evolve into many sorts of things.

The "awareness of the joke" is a hard one to explain. This runs along at zero, he's not aware of the joke, and suddenly around 50 to 60 to 70 he becomes quite aware of the joke and then it fades out. The joke will be recognized by many of you who have had psychedelic drugs. You're starting to get high and somewhere along in there you suddenly realize from some higher part of "yourself" how ridiculous it is to attempt to get high! I mean really, what's the point of trying to find out where it's at, to get high and all that sort of thing? Here's this poor pitiful little ego, that doesn't know it's already there, trying to get up there! It's kind of funny. But he goes beyond that. The joke fades out after a while as he continues to go further into hypnosis (if it's still "hypnosis").

I talked about a sense of potentiality in the identity thing. Here, looking at it in a sort of different way, he eventually becomes aware of an infinite amount of potential. Anything is possible. Absolutely anything could be experienced in the kind of existence he's in.

The experimenter's identity is interesting. I'm just me at the lightest levels of hypnosis; as he goes into what we would call ordinary deep hypnosis he becomes more and more focused on me. I'm the only thing that he really pays strict attention to. But then I start becoming distant and kind of a remote thing and then I lose my identity altogether. I'm no longer Charlie Tart; I'm just a voice: just something that keeps talking. And it not only stays that way but finally he says, as he exists in infinite consciousness, the whole sea of being and so forth, that way out on the edge somewhere here's this little ripple.

It keeps asking silly questions like "How do you feel now?" A total depersonalization of who I am but he sort of feels kindly toward this voice. The voice has to ask questions so he'll be nice to me and so forth. Although it's a drag to have to answer them!

Time is an interesting thing. A lot of times in hypnosis you get people's sense of time slowing down. Here time seems to go slower and slower up to this quite deep hypnosis range of about 40, but then a very interesting thing happens. He suddenly says he can't tell me whether time is going slower or faster because at that point his nature of being in time changes. He's in time here, which is slowing, and then he goes out of time and time is a meaningless concept. Beyond this point, queries about his time going fast or slow are stupid questions. They just don't mean anything. He no longer feels that he's in the kind of space-time framework we talk about.

A feeling of oneness with the universe continues to go up. I don't know whether it plateaus off at a very deep level or not.

If I ask you "What are you thinking about?" you'll undoubtedly tell me something going through your mind. We keep the old machine whirling around all the time computing everything that comes along. This spontaneous mental activity continues to decrease as he goes deeper in hypnosis and beyond the deep range he's simply not having any spontaneous thought. If I don't tell him "Think about this" or "Answer this question" there's nothing going on in his mind. It's absolutely quiet.

One other thing, his awareness of his breathing; he feels as if his breathing gets deeper and deeper as he goes into hypnosis until there's a point when his breathing suddenly feels as if it becomes quite shallow. He's virtually not aware of it any more unless this little voice at the edges of consciousness says "How's your breathing?"

Now, the point I want to make about this is that up to 40 or so on the graph we're talking about hypnosis, and we're talking about a rather neutral kind of hypnosis. I haven't suggested particular things. These are just the kinds of things he usually experiences as he's going into deep hypnosis. In a higher range, roughly 50 to 70, a lot of these kinds of phenomena change fairly suddenly. There's some step function: some of these things start going up or down rather suddenly. And I think what we have here is a transition to a new state of consciousness. In many ways, it sounds like what's traditionally been called the Void. I'm a little leery of using that word because the Void is a great thing to be in, and you get a lot of prestige and all that sort of spiritual one-upmanship. But it kind of sounds like the Void. His identity is potentiality, he's aware of everything and nothing, his mind is absolutely quiet, he's out of time, and out of space, and so forth. But this is the sort of thing that happens to him.

Now I should again emphasize that this is an extremely good subject. This is not something that the average hypnotic subject could just move right into, although probably more subjects could move into it if they were given special training. The main thing that I want to emphasize is that I think this illustrates first the humanistic potential of hypnosis, where the experimenter-subject relationship changes: I'm no longer the boss shaping his consciousness to do what I think he ought to do, I'm just sort of the guide and he's the one who does this sort of thing. But even more, it illustrates some of the transcendental potentialities of hypnosis: how you can use this to move to relatively profound states of consciousness; you can use it to explore consciousness; and we can open up a number of things that ordinarily you don't think of in connection with hypnosis where the usual association is the big authority figure who says "sleep." …

Chapter 26
Ernest Hilgard - Deep Hypnosis and Its Characteristics

Editor: This is an excerpt from Ernest R. Hilgard, *Divided Consciousness: Multiple Controls in Human Thought and Action*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1977, 167-171.

Ernest R. Hilgard

Hypnotic responsiveness and hypnotic depth are related in that the more hypnotizable person can experience greater depth of hypnosis. Responsiveness and depth are not the same thing, however, because a responsive person can experience hypnosis at greater or lesser degrees of depth and has no difficulty in assigning numerical values to the depth as he perceives it. To obtain a more complete picture of the massive dissociations possible in hypnosis, it is essential to work with the highly responsive persons as described here and to permit them to experience hypnosis at depths beyond those usually attained.

The concept of depth of hypnosis, like depth of sleep, is a convenient metaphor. The metaphor is an ancient one and is carried also by the word profound, with the root meaning of near the bot-

tom (Latin, *pro fundus*). The psychologies deriving from Freud are often called depth psychologies. The notion of exploring the depths of personality goes back at least to a fragment from Heraclitus (ca. 500 B.C.):

You could not discover the depths of the psyche, even if you traveled every road to do so; such is the depth of its meaning.

The metaphor of depth is very compelling, but it is only a metaphor; care must be taken not to embody it with our own values. In hypnosis, it means only the pervasiveness of the changes from the normal condition and can as well be described as degree of involvement or immersion in the hypnotic experience.

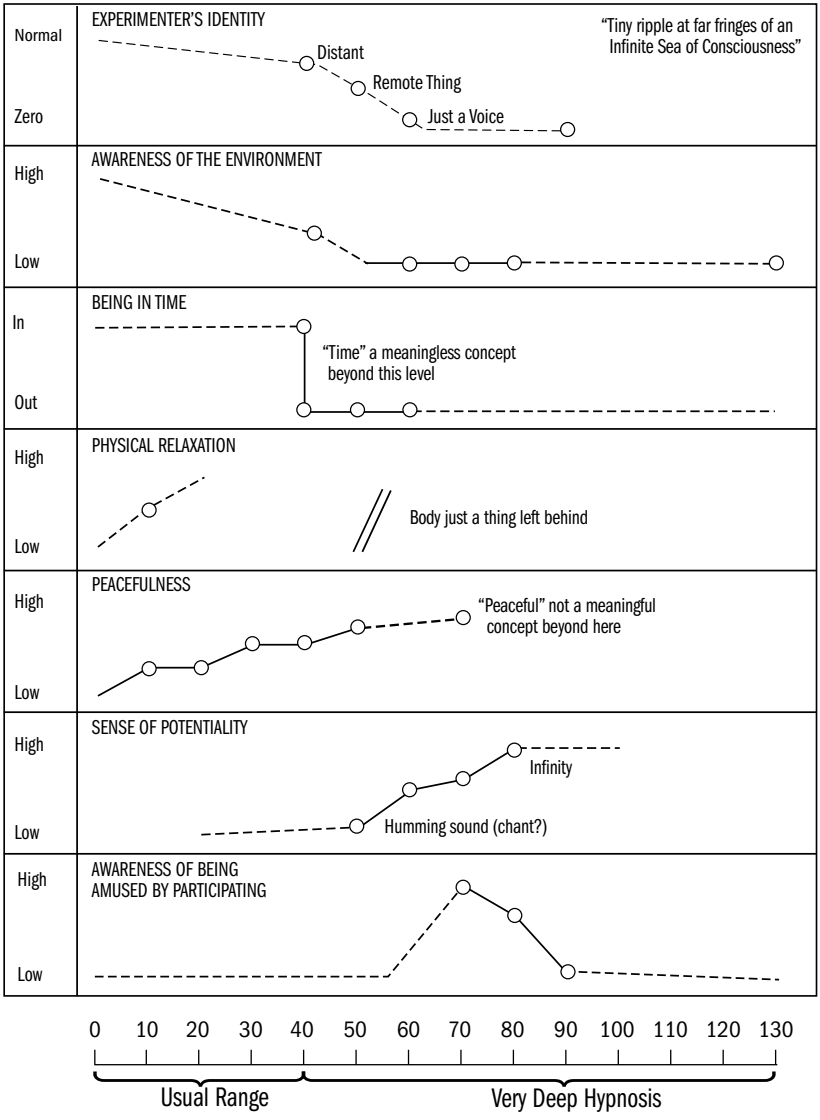
Depth cannot be described solely by the responsiveness to suggestions as these are scored in tests of hypnosis; at greater depths, responses to suggestion, instead of being enhanced, may disappear entirely. When deep hypnosis is involved, the best measures are numerical estimates made by the subject on his own scale. This is equivalent to magnitude estimation as used in psychophysics and is very satisfactory. As in psychophysical experiments, very little practice is required for the subject to learn to assign self-consistent numbers for his subjectively experienced depth. If he uses a number between 5 and 10 to define his depth when he is capable of meeting the usual demands made on a hypnotized subject, he may assign numbers as high as 50 or 100 or even higher as he goes still deeper.

To achieve great depth, it is necessary to select a responsive subject and permit him to increase his depth over time, either by repeated and prolonged suggestions by the hypnotist or by extensive self-hypnosis.

Charles Tart (1970,1972) had experimented for some time with self-report scales of hypnotic depth before conducting his experiment on great depth. His case of William represents the deep hypnosis experiences of a subject who scored within a point of the maximum of the Profile Scales, hence in the upper 1 or 2% of hypnotic responsiveness. He had been hypnotized 18 times previously for various purposes, often with an emphasis on depth. Although extreme depth had not been stressed, on his scale William usually gave reports of 40 or 50, with amnesia experienced at 30. He had never gone beyond 60.

A session was undertaken in which he agreed to attempt to go much deeper than he had gone before. He was instructed that at each 10-point interval on a depth continuum he should remain at that depth as the experimenter had him describe what he was experiencing. Tart has presented a somewhat complex summary of his reports associated with depth, a few of which have been selected for reproduction in Figure 16.

Figure 16.
Self-Reported Hypnotic Depth
Self-reported hypnotic experiences at various depths by one selected subject. Modified from Tart (1972).



His reports of changes at the depths more commonly studied in the laboratory repeat the familiar: an early relaxation, a fairly normal

awareness of the experimenter, although he may become a little distant, an increase in peacefulness, a gradual withdrawal from the environment. Beginning at a level of about 50 on this scale, however, distortions of consciousness occur that have some similarity to the reports of mystical experiences. The experimenter's voice becomes impersonal, the passage of time becomes meaningless, the body seems to be left behind, a new sense of infinite potentiality emerges, ultimately reaching the sense of oneness with the universe. These reports from this single subject are intriguing enough to indicate that the full potential of hypnosis may not be explored in most of the experiments or in clinical applications that rely on demonstrable changes in behavior brought about by the hypnotic interaction.

One feature of William's account that is interesting in relation to dissociation is the intrusion, in the earlier stages of the now deeper hypnosis, of the experience that some part of him is amused by his participation in these consciousness-alerting activities. This sudden intrusion of a critical observing part amused by the turn of events began about 50, was first reported clearly at 70, and then dropped out at 90 and was no longer mentioned. A hint of a hidden observer is implied.

In our studies of deep hypnosis in a few pilot subjects who were not as experienced in hypnosis as William, many similar experiences have been reported. Our method has been to select moderately high subjects (not necessarily those classified as virtuosos), to hypnotize them, and then to invite them to experience deeper hypnosis without repeated suggestions from the hypnotist. They are to report their depth on a numerical scale from time to time, but there is little questioning of the experience while it is occurring. A protective suggestion is given that, if a subject should happen to lose contact with the hypnotist's voice at a deeper stage, his depth can be lightened by the hypnotist's hand placed on the shoulder, and he will then be back in communication with the hypnotist. We recognize that there is an

implied suggestion here that such a state may be reached, and we have not yet performed the necessary control experiments to determine the role of the subject's expectations and his interpretation of the experimenter's demands.

Our arbitrary scale starts somewhat lower than Tart's, for our subjects have assigned a depth of about 8 or 10, in most cases, to the established hypnotic state in which they experience analgesia and amnesia, can perform automatic writing, and so on. However, they go on to much deeper states by themselves. Those who have lost contact with the experimenter as evidenced by no longer replying to requests for a depth report have done so typically at a depth of about 50. They may then continue to depths they later report to have been 80 or 90. After the experimenter places his hand on the shoulder to reduce the depth and inquiries about the current hypnotic depth, he asks what the deepest depth had been. This completes the deep hypnosis part of the experiment, and the subject is told that he will remember his experiences when aroused from hypnosis and will be able to talk about them. A thorough inquiry then follows.

Observations frequently include a loss of any connection with the body, a failure of time to have any meaning, the pleasantness of the experience, and some reports characteristic of mystical experiences—a sense of oneness, a feeling of having acquired some knowledge that is not communicable. What the subject reports is colored by his nonhypnotic experiences of meditation, perhaps of familiarity with Gestalt therapy, sometimes evident in the vocabularies used to describe the experiences, such as the nonlinearity of the experiences or their Gestalt qualities. The method is more like meditation than ordinary hypnosis in that the experimenter is so much less intrusive; in hypnosis, the subject commonly waits for what the experimenter is going to ask him to do; in self-deepening, the deepening is his own affair, and the depth reports are quite automatic. Tart reports William as saying that the appropriate number to describe his state

just popped into his mind. He had no idea how these numbers were generated, and it was reported that he did not "understand" them. Our subjects confirmed this nature of the numerical reports of depth.

The experiments just described have not gone into the question of prolonged hypnosis, and little evidence is available. Erickson (1952) gave his account of deep hypnosis, leading to what he described as a *plenary* trance, in which the subject becomes essentially inert or stuporous. His discussions are generally quite informal; therefore, comparison with the deep state produced in the laboratory studies is not possible. However, it may be noted that the primary symptom Erickson emphasized was losing contact with the body; restoration sometimes came as a shock, and he warned that care should be taken to restore the normal condition slowly as a precaution against this. Although responses to the hypnotist came more slowly in the deep trance, his subject, according to Erickson, did not in fact lose contact.

Because hypnosis is usually studied at much lighter levels of involvement, it is more often described according to the characteristic responses to the hypnotist's suggestions. The studies of deep hypnosis indicate that these specific responses may not occur in the context of massive dissociations characterizing the more involved hypnotic condition.

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Chapter 27
Spencer Sherman - Brief Report: Very Deep Hypnosis

Editor: From Spencer Sherman, "Brief Report: Very Deep Hypnosis," *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 1972, Vol. 4, no 1, 87-91. This research is presented in greater detail in the author's PhD thesis entitled "Very Deep Hypnosis: An Experiential and Electroencephalographic Investigation," dated August 1971. The majority of the dissertation is reprinted later in this book with pages added that are missing from the microfilm. Formerly available from University Microfilms, the dissertation is now available through ProQuest at http://dissexpress.umi.com and can also be found in some university libraries.

Spencer Sherman

The Research Problem

Almost all hypnosis research has focused on evocation or enhancement of abilities as a result of specific suggestions (Weitzenhoffer, 1963; Hilgard, 1968; Barber, 1969). Very little research has concentrated on the experiences subjects report when they are unprogrammed by suggestion. Additionally, virtually no rigorous research

has explored very deep hypnotic depths—those depths beyond the levels normally reached by excellent subjects (Tart, 1970b). The present study attempts to answer the question: When subjects are allowed to go extremely deep into hypnosis and are asked simply to let whatever happens happen, what are their experiences, is there commonality among them, and can they be logically ordered?

Electroencephalographic studies have found no differences between the EEGs of waking and hypnotized subjects (Chertok & Kramarz, 1959; Weitzenhoffer, 1963; Edmonston, 1967; Barber, 1970; Galbraith, et al., 1970). Since the depths explored in this research are more profound than those previously researched, an EEG investigation is included.

Procedure

Ten subjects were selected, using the criteria of very wide experience and demonstrated excellence as hypnotic subjects. A special set and setting were created, enabling the subjects to go very deeply into hypnosis. In this set and setting, honesty and trust between subject and experimenter were central. Depth was monitored at intervals by self-report; this technique has been shown to be a valid depth indicator (Tart, 1970a).

Each subject underwent three individual hypnosis sessions. The first two sessions for each subject were structured similarly: the subject, after being told to minimize expectations and to simply experience whatever he experienced, induced himself as deeply as he was able. Every few minutes, he was asked "depth?" and "what have you been experiencing?" The questions and answers were recorded, and after awakening, the subject completed a variety of questionnaires designed to permit full explication of his experiences.

The third session differed from the first two in that continuous elec-

troencephalographic recording was done throughout the session.

Results

A wide variety of experiences was reported, many showing very strong intersubject consistency (with a statistical significance beyond the .001 level). Experiences characteristic of the deepest phase of very deep hypnosis include: being everything, feeling oneness with everything, loss of knowledge of individual identity, no "self" or "ego," blankness, absolute mental quiet—no thoughts or images, voidness, and nothing happening. Other experiences characteristic of very deep hypnosis are: difficulty in talking, other realities, feeling totally free, complete loss of touch with external environment, feeling of motion, feeling totally spread out, mind fully separated and physically distant from body, thoughts widely spaced, subconscious thoughts and images, dissolving or spreading out, warmth or cold, feeling totally inside one's head, loss of touch with body, occasional isolated images, great darkness, no sense of time, feeling afraid, thinking in images rather than words, feelings of joy, separating of parts of the mind, feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head, great brightness, feeling of floating, and feeling of clairvoyance or telepathy.

Electroencephalographically, eight of the ten subjects showed a phenomenon that occurred only at what the subject described as extremely profound depths. At those very deep points, the amplitude of the electroencephalogram, from both vertex and occipital electrode loci, showed periods of drastic decrease. These periods of marked amplitude diminution were easily distinguishable from the electroencephalographic patterns immediately preceding and following them.

Discussion

Based on my limited understanding, I offer the following viewpoint on very deep hypnosis. As a subject proceeds from light into deeper hypnosis, he progressively experiences and then "turns off" (in order to go still deeper) more and more basic conscious functions. Usually, this involves paying attention to simpler and simpler conscious phenomena. For example, while in light hypnosis, a subject might experience memories involving fairly vivid pictures, as well as sounds, tactile sensations, verbal thoughts, etc. As he progresses deeper, he experiences occasional isolated images, unconnected to verbal thoughts. The subject might also proceed from experiencing complex ideas at light levels to perceiving only visual phenomena, such as great brightness, while at deeper levels.

There are exceptions to the progression towards simpler functioning—most notably "subconscious" phenomena, which typically occur deep and for which the complexity issue is not settled. However, the progression toward more basic functioning still applies; subconscious events can be viewed as extremely basic functions (this view of subconscious and other related phenomena is perhaps best elucidated by Carl Jung).

At the most profound depths, the subject has succeeded in turning off almost all conscious activity. The experiences he does attend to (being everything; feeling oneness with everything; blankness; absolute mental quiet, no thoughts, images, etc.; voidness; nothing happening) are those that are more basic than his individual personality (loss of knowledge of individual identity; no self or ego). In other words, the subject has passed beyond all those cognitive patterns that define him as a specific person and separate him from other people and his environment. What is left is undifferentiated awareness—the awareness of purely "being," through which the person is identical to everything in the universe.

Another way of stating this viewpoint is to assert that the subjects gradually open themselves to more universal stimulus processing messages. Since there exists less "noise" generated by their individual personalities, they are able to "listen" in increasingly subtle ways, ending with the pure perception of existence, which underlies, and has as its overlay, every particular (differentiable) experience with which the person comes into contact. Even time is seen as a personal construct, a part of that overlay.

The electroencephalographic results can be interpreted as supporting this viewpoint. As the subjects go very deep into hypnosis, most show a decrease in EEG amplitude—that is, less brain electrical activity. At the deepest points, almost all subjects show a diminution of EEG activity to very low levels. This phenomenon may indicate that subjects have ceased all normal activity; the minimal electrical activity that remains may reflect undifferentiated awareness, or events from deeper or lower nervous system loci which have no conscious reflection.

Conclusions

The research presented indicates that: (1) it is possible for (at least some) hypnotic subjects to go deeper into hypnosis than has been previously explored; (2) the experiences reported in very deep hypnosis are consistent across subjects and follow a meaningful pattern—the deepest of them show a correspondence to what is usually labeled "mystical" or "unitive" experience (Watts, 1960; Deikman, 1969; Grof, 1970; Harman, 1971; Ram Dass, 1971); (3) very deep hypnosis appears to be characterized by a particular electroencephalographic pattern that differs from that of the waking state.

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Chapter 28
Spencer Sherman - Very Deep Hypnosis: An Experiential and Electroencephalographic Investigation

Editor: This is Spencer Sherman's PhD dissertation done at Stanford University and dated August 1971. The following transcript is based on a microfilm version archived by ProQuest. The microfilm version was missing pages 33–46, 49–51, and 68–75. These pages have been restored here from an original copy kept by Dr. Sherman. The following sections are missing from this reprint for reasons of space: Figure G, EEG recordings; Appendix B, Illustrative session transcripts; and Appendix C, Experiential data graphs. See the original microfilm for these sections.

Spencer Elliott Sherman

ABSTRACT

The Research Problem

Almost all hypnosis research has focused on evocation or enhancement of abilities as a result of specific suggestions. Very little

research has concentrated on the experiences subjects report when they are unprogrammed by suggestion. Additionally, virtually no strict research has explored very deep hypnotic depths – those depths beyond the levels normally reached by excellent subjects. The present thesis attempts to answer the question: when subjects are allowed to go extremely deep into hypnosis and are simply asked to just let whatever happens happen, what are their experiences, is there commonality among them, and can they be logically ordered?

Electroencephalographic studies have found no differences between the EEGs of waking and hypnotized subjects. Since the depths explored in the present research are more profound than those previously researched, an EEG investigation is included.

Procedure

Ten subjects were selected, using the criteria of very wide experience and demonstrated excellence as hypnotic subjects. A special set and setting was created, enabling the subjects to go very deeply into hypnosis. As this set and setting, honesty and trust between subject and experimenter were central. Depth was monitored at intervals by self-report; this technique has been shown to be a valid depth indicator.

Each subject underwent three individual hypnosis sessions. The first two sessions for each subject were structured similarly: the subject, after being told to minimize expectations and to simply experience whatever he experienced, induced himself as deeply as he was able. Every few minutes, he was asked "depth?" and "what have you been experiencing?" The questions and answers were recorded, and after awakening, the subject completed a variety of instruments designed to permit full explication of his experiences.

The third sessions differed from the first two in that continuous electroencephalographic recording was done throughout the session.

Results

A wide variety of experiences were reported, many showing very strong inter-subject consistency (with a statistical significance beyond the .001 level). Experiences characteristic of very deep hypnosis include: being everything, feeling oneness with everything, loss of knowledge of your individual identity, no "self" or "ego," blankness, absolute mental quiet – no thoughts or images, voidness, and nothing happening. Other experiences characteristic of very deep hypnosis are: difficulty in talking, other realities, feeling totally free, complete loss of touch with external environment, feeling of motion, feeling totally spread out, mind fully separated and distant from body, thoughts widely spaced, subconscious thoughts and images, dissolving or spreading out, warmth or cold, feeling totally inside one's head, loss of touch with body, occasional isolated images, great darkness, no sense of time, feeling afraid, thinking in images rather than words, feelings of joy, separating of parts of the mind, feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head, great brightness, feelings of floating, and feelings of clairvoyance or telepathy.

Electroencephalographically, eight of the ten subjects showed a phenomenon, which occurred only at extremely profound depths. At those very deep points, the amplitude of the electroencephalogram, from both vertex and occipital electrode loci, showed periods of drastic decrease. These periods of marked amplitude diminution were easily distinguishable from the electroencephalographic patterns immediately preceding and following them.

Conclusions

The research presented in the current dissertation indicates that:

1) it is possible for (at least some) hypnotic subjects to go deeper into hypnosis than has been previously explored.
2) the experiences reported in very deep hypnosis are consistent across subjects and follow a meaningful pattern. The deepest of them show a correspondence to what is usually labeled "mystical" or "unitive" experience.
3) very deep hypnosis appears to be characterized by a particular electroencephalographic pattern that differs from that of the waking state.

Introduction

Perspective on the Research

In the past several decades, much research of a behavioral nature has been directed toward hypnosis. The focus of this research has been on overt responses of the hypnotized subject. On the one hand, this approach was never better suited to be applied to a problem: hypnosis, highly tinged with folklore and anecdote, is very much in need of an objective basis for investigation. To distill the essential variables and their effects from the plethora of possibilities raised by many years of anecdote required (and still requires) a strict methodology – one amenable to unambiguous measurement and replication.

The behavioral approach, however, has not yet proved its value in hypnosis research. It is apparent that much of the research so far accomplished has worked around the problem; research to date has not been successful in identifying the essence of the phenomenon of hypnosis.

This point is exemplified by the diversity of theory now proffered to help understand hypnosis [Shor (1969a, 1969b), Gill and Brenman (1959), Hilgard (1968), Barber (1969, 1970), and Sutcliffe, Orne, and Sarbin (well summarized in Hilgard, 1968)]. The areas of disagreement among these theories are perhaps wider than their areas of congruence. The terms employed by the theorists differ radically. Differences are so great that, for example, hypnotic induction itself is disputed – while Hilgard talks routinely of induction, Barber finds it not a meaningful construct.

It is logical to attempt to understand any phenomenon by studying it in its clearest and strongest form. For hypnosis, such a strategy means studying the phenomenon as it exists when unclouded by suggestions, and when the subject is deepest in it. As will be explained below, little such research has previously been accomplished. There exists a void in the area seemingly most amenable to beginning theory construction. The present dissertation investigates this critical area – very deep, suggestion-free hypnosis.

Orne and O'Connell (1967, p. 130) have said "it is our view that the most characteristic aspect of hypnosis is the subjective experience and the behavioral responses are meaningful only insofar as they reflect changes in subjective experience." This author also feels that experiential investigations hold great promise for clarifying the confused state of current thinking about hypnosis. The research presented here attempts to treat very deep hypnosis with the behavioral tools that *directly* focus on the experience itself.

The challenge remains: to apply strict methodology in a continuing attempt to fully understand what we mean by "hypnosis."

Research Background

Most hypnosis research has focused on the subject's responses to *suggestions* of enhanced physical or mental abilities. For example, important research questions have been "can a subject enhance his ability to endure pain when told to do so while hypnotized?" (see Weitzenhoffer, 1963; Hilgard, 1968; and Barber, 1969), "can a hypnotized subject visually hallucinate in response to suggestion?" (see Weitzenhoffer, 1963; Hilgard, 1968; and Barber, 1969), and "can a subject distort time while in hypnosis?" (see Cooper, 1948; Cooper and Erickson, 1950; and Weitzenhoffer, 1963). As a further illustration, the most widely accepted method of determining susceptibility to hypnosis involves attempting induction of the naive subject into a light trance and, while in that state, measuring his responses to a variety of physical and mental suggestions (see especially Hilgard, 1968).

Little research has been directed toward mapping the state or states of hypnosis that exist when no explicit suggestion has been made. The basic general research questions here might be "when subjects are allowed to go into hypnosis and are simply asked to just let whatever happens happen, what are their experiences, is there commonality among them, and can they be logically ordered?" The research reported here focuses directly on these questions. It is almost unique in doing so; however, since there is a trend in psychology toward studying experience per se (Sutich, 1969; Esalen staff, 1971; Fadiman, 1971; Tart, 1969c), it is probable that more directly experiential research in hypnosis will be accomplished.

The label "deep hypnosis," although rich in meaning, is not strictly definable in terms of previous research. Milton Erickson, a pioneer in modern hypnosis research, wrote an article in 1952 titled "Deep Hypnosis and Its Induction." While Erickson often did not employ rigorous methodology, and while this long article contains only a few pages about the experience of deep hypnosis – the bulk of the

article concerns how to induce it – Erickson did furnish the following description: "Stated briefly, deep hypnosis is that level of hypnosis that permits the subject to function adequately and directly at an unconscious level of awareness without interference by the conscious mind" (p. 80). This description is not rich in experiential detail. In the following passage, Erickson gives a bit more detail and explains the limits of his experience with the deep state free from suggestions: "The … trance is … marked by both psychological and physiological retardation. Spontaneous behavior and initiative … are lacking. There is likely to be a marked perseveration of incomplete responsive behavior, and there is a definite loss of ability to appreciate the self. Medical colleagues asked by the author to examine subjects in a stuporous trance without knowledge of the hypnotic situation have repeatedly offered the tentative opinion of a narcotized state. In the author's experience the stuporous trance is difficult to obtain in many subjects, apparently because of their objection to losing their awareness of themselves as persons. Its use by the author has been limited primarily to the study of physiological behavior and to its therapeutic application in certain types of profoundly neurotic patients" (p. 82).

Erickson also conducted a study with Aldous Huxley as the single hypnotic subject which explored the deep state (Erickson in Tart, 1969). Huxley was able to perform a wide variety of suggested behaviors; Erickson reports Huxley responded to virtually the entire gamut of standard hypnotic suggestions. For example, Huxley was able to develop excellent partial and complete posthypnotic amnesias.

No other research until quite recently (Tart, 1970b) has focused specifically on the experience of deep hypnosis. However, a small amount of experiential exploration of hypnosis in general has been done, primarily using verbal report both during and after the session as the behavioral response. Gill and Brenman (1959), as well summarized by Barber (1969, p. 106), report that: "The most strik-

ing of the spontaneous changes in self-awareness are those in *body experience* … We shall commence with the reported experiences of *changes in size*. In the complete absence of any hypnotic instructions to this effect, a subject may report an experience of a radical alteration in the size of his whole body or a portion of it … Another frequent kind of spontaneous change is in the experience of *equilibrium*. Generalized sensations of giddiness or dizziness are not at all uncommon … A regular concomitant of this turning of attention inward is what might be described as a lowered sense of outer reality, variously expressed by our subjects and patients: "Everything in the room seems covered by a veil," or, "It all seems shadowy and dreamlike" ... We turn now to still another form of spontaneous change in bodily experience, namely, a subjective experience of the *loss of the body or of its parts*. Subjects going into hypnosis frequently report either isolated instances of the "disappearance" of an arm, a foot, a leg, or a smooth and progressive loss of awareness of the entire body." These observations have particular relevance for this dissertation, since they treat experiences that happen spontaneously, rather than in response to specific suggestions.

Weitzenhoffer (1963, p. 10-11) distinguishes hypnoidal (very light), light, medium, and somnambulistic (his blanket term for deep) depths, and defines the last as follows: "Ability to open the eyes without affecting the trance, bizarre post-hypnotic suggestions, complete somnambulism, positive visual hallucinations, posthypnotic; positive auditory hallucinations, posthypnotic; systematized posthypnotic amnesias, negative auditory hallucinations, negative visual hallucinations; hyperesthesia." However, all the experiences cited are in response to specific suggestions; no non-suggested experiences are discussed.

Hilgard (1968, p. 12) presents a table charting the experiences of one hundred fifty-nine subjects following their first attempted induction. The experiences he asks subjects about include disinclination

to speak, disinclination to move, disinclination to think, feeling of compulsion in response to suggestions, changes in size or appearance of parts of the body, feeling of floating, feeling of blacking out, feeling of dizziness, feeling of spinning, and similarity to sleep.

As mentioned earlier, Tart (1970b) has recently published an account of the non-suggested experiences of one exceptional subject who underwent several very deep trances. While the account is transcribed from a panel discussion, and so little data is presented, Tart does mention that his subject's trances showed consistency. Tart states that as the subject went deeper (ultimately to a point that the subject reported was far beyond that depth at which he normally accomplished all suggestions requiring a deep or profound trance), awareness of breathing changed and then was lost, spontaneous mental activity fell to zero, feelings of oneness with everything increased, time as a concept became meaningless, rate of time passage changed, as did the sense of the experimenter's identity, sense of potentiality rose, sense of personal identity changed, awareness of the environment decreased, peacefulness increased and then became meaningless as a concept, visual blackness increased, and physical relaxation increased and then ceased to be meaningful (for a more complete summary presentation, see the chart, Tart, 1970b, p. 33).

An overview of this small body of previous research shows that several researchers have found the same experiences occurring in deep hypnosis free from suggestions. These experiences are: changes in body experience and equilibrium, decreased sense of personal identity, lack of spontaneous overt movement, and disinclination to think. These experiences, then, provide expectations for the present research. However, since so little work has been accomplished in the area, each single account is important. Tart's recent work, especially, is valuable, since he explicitly treats the most profound depths his exceptional subject can reach (a fuller discussion of the deep end of the hypnotic depth continuum follows in the "Depth" section). The

experiences he describes are interesting in light of their presence during other "altered" or "non-ordinary" states of consciousness. These non-hypnotic experiences are treated fully in the "Discussion" chapter.

Electroencephalography

Electroencephalographic studies have failed thus far to find any conclusive points of difference between awake and hypnotized subjects. Many differences clearly do exist; the failure to find them is due to the newness and insensitivity (to date) of electroencephalographic technique. As Chertok and Kramarz (1959, p. 237) state, "discrepancies, noted in the conclusions of the writers in this field, seem to be due primarily to methodological difficulties and to the complexity of the hypnotic phenomenon."

Chertok and Kramarz (1959, p. 227), after doing an extensive critical survey of the EEG literature and their own research, conclude that "these investigations are difficult and the conclusions contradictory." Wietzenhoffer (1953, p. 94) states that "it has been the consensus of opinion in the past that the electroencephalograms observed in hypnosis show no appreciable difference than those observed in the waking state." However, he goes on to say that "it would seem, therefore, that although outwardly electroencephalograms show hypnosis to be more like wakefulness and less like sleep, a more refined study of the records shows hypnosis to be more like *light* sleep, and like neither waking nor deep sleep" (p. 95).

This somewhat hopeful view, proffered in 1953, is not shared by more contemporary researchers. Chertok and Kramarz (1959) consider this view and then reject it. Edmonston (in Gordon, 1967) reviews the literature and fails to find reliable EEG-hypnosis correlations, and Barber (1970, p. 185-186) states that "Some years ago it seemed that the electroencephalograph would prove to be

a valuable tool for determining when a person was or was not hypnotized. This hope has not been realized." Hilgard (1968, p. 150) concludes from the research literature that "the hypnotic state in general shows waking electroencephalograms." Finally, Galbraith, London, Leibovitz, Cooper, and Hart (1970, p. 125) states "the weight of evidence favors waking EEG patterns during the hypnotic state."

These last researchers have contributed to a recent body of research which attempts to demonstrate a correlation between alpha frequency EEG activity in a resting waking state and hypnotic *susceptibility* (London, Hart, and Leibovitz, 1968; Nowlis and Rhead, 1968; Hartnett, Nowlis, and Svorad, 1969; Galbraith, London, Leibovitz, Cooper, and Hart, 1970; Engstrom, London, and Hart, 1970). Investigation centers around a reported positive correlation between percentage of time doing alpha in the resting state and score on the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale. While debate about this research continues, its focus on susceptibility rather than the experience of hypnosis renders it only tangential interest for this thesis.

Electroencephalographic research into Zen and Yoga meditation has yielded positive results. An investigation of four Yogis (Anand, Chhina, and Singh, in Tart, 1969) found that the Yogis, while meditating, showed increased amplitude modulation of their already prominent alpha activity, and did not alpha-block to various sensory stimuli. A study of forty-eight Zen meditators (Kasamatsu and Hirai, in Tart, 1969) found (p. 496) that "alpha waves increase amplitude and decrease frequency with the progress of Zen meditation. And sometimes the rhythmical theta train appears in the later stage of the meditation." In addition, Kasamatsu and Hirai found repeated alpha blocking to click stimuli, with no habituation. Tart (1969c, p. 486) offers an explanation for the diverse results; he points out that the immediate goals of Zen and Yoga

meditation are quite different, and that the EEG changes observed are consistent with those goals.

The success of these investigations into meditation calls into question the finality of the negative electroencephalographic findings concerning hypnosis, since both research areas deal with an altered experiential field. It can be logically argued that the alteration is more radical in the case of meditation (although there exists no empirical data), and that only this more complete alteration of consciousness is reflected by a technique as insensitive as electroencephalography. However, the present study treats hypnosis in its strongest and least confounded form (as was discussed earlier); subjects go very deep into hypnosis, and are free from diverse suggestions. It would seem, therefore, that EEG changes due to hypnosis would be most easily obtainable in the present study. The encouraging meditation findings and the form of the present research provide the rationale for inclusion of electroencephalography in this dissertation.

Depth

The depth criterion used in this research is based on each subject's verbal estimation of his depth in hypnosis. Tart (1970a) has extensively reviewed various approaches to hypnotic depth, and has concluded, first, that depth itself is a highly meaningful concept. This is in accord with the predominant view in hypnosis research. Tart (1969a, p. 4) states "Work with hypnosis particularly (Hilgard and Tart, 1966; Tart, 1968) indicates that subjects' reports of the depth of the state of consciousness are excellent predictors of other effects potentially available at that depth, and form lawful continua when mapped for individual subjects." Second, Tart reviews research that demonstrates that immediate ver-

bal estimation of depth by the hypnotized subject is an excellent depth indicator, (1970a). This method of depth measurement is employed in the research described in this thesis.

If conditions are made ideal for doing so (see the "Set and Setting" section of the next chapter), some exceptional hypnotic subjects report that they are able to achieve hypnotic depths more profound than those usually referred to as deep hypnosis. A subject is usually considered to be "deep" when he can carry out diverse difficult suggestions easily and with reality. For example, Weitzenhoffer's (1963) definition of deep hypnosis is constructed in terms of his subjects' ability to carry out suggestions: for example, being able to produce a convincing negative visual hallucination. This is generally considered a difficult task; most hypnotic subjects cannot make an object disappear before their eyes (Hilgard, 1968, p. 140, reports only ten percent of subjects taking the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale were able to make one of three boxes disappear).

Subjects in the current research, all of whom had extensive training and good familiarity and success with standard difficult suggestions, reported that in the present research they attained depths beyond those at which they could and usually did carry out difficult suggestions. These reports are coincident with the report of Tart's (1970b) exceptional subject.

On the depth scale presented below, the subjects often reported themselves much deeper than depth 40. When they did so, they were referred to as being in "very deep hypnosis," to distinguish these more profound depths from the "deep" area at around depth 40.

The present research used the depth scale below. The labeled points and their values are:

0	**normal; awake**
10	**feel slightly different than normal**
20	**light hypnosis**
30	**moderate hypnosis**
40	**deep hypnosis**
	(scale is open-ended)

.....

The only additional piece of information given to the subjects was that 40 is about the point at which all the most difficult suggestions they had been given in their training are fully real and/or realizable.

It is evident that the depth scale is designed to measure depth while conveying no implicit suggestions about what is "supposed" to be experienced. The values 0 to 40 are assigned to roughly correspond with the numbering of the North Carolina Scale (see Tart, 1970a, p. 107) and the scale used in Tart, 1970b. In pilot testing, subjects reported full comprehension of the scale and satisfaction with using it.

Time Interval Estimation Measure

An additional behavior that has promise of furthering understanding of very deep hypnosis is the hypnotized subject's estimate of the duration of an interval of time. Ornstein (1969) has demonstrated that the experience of duration is positively related to the amount of information processed in an interval. For example, if all other variables are held constant, a subject will estimate a five minute interval which is filled with a hundred bits of information to be longer than a five minute interval which is only filled with ten bits of information.

If, as previous research and pilot testing for the current thesis seemed to indicate, the amount of spontaneous mental activity experienced by a hypnotic subject drops off sharply as he goes deep into hypnosis, he ought to judge a five minute interval in very deep hypnosis as short, compared to his estimation of the duration of a five minute interval in light hypnosis.

Such a test was included in each hypnosis session, without the knowledge of the subject. Twice during each session, the subject was asked to estimate how much time had passed since the last verbal contact with the experimenter. The actual interval was five minutes in each case. The answer was recorded and the session continued in its natural course. In each session, five minute interval duration estimates were made in both very deep and light hypnosis.

In summary, the current research was carried out to gain familiarity with the previously unresearched deep end of the hypnotic depth continuum. The author hopes to demonstrate that highly interesting experiences occur in very deep hypnosis, that they are consistent across subjects, and that very deep hypnosis is accompanied by electroencephalographic patterns that distinguish it from the waking state.

Method

Overview of the Design

Each of ten subjects experienced three hypnosis sessions. The first two sessions directly explored experiential factors in very deep hypnosis: the subjects were asked to relay the quality and character of the experience both while they were having it and afterward. A variety of data gathering instruments were employed. The third session explored EEG changes during very deep hypnosis.

The design is basically within-subjects. The object in the experiential phase is to place each subject in very deep hypnosis, record his experiences, observe how they differ from his experiences in less profound hypnosis, and then search for consistency between subjects. For the electroencephalography, the object is to compare each subject's waking baseline and moderate hypnosis EEG with his very deep EEG, and then to see if any differences found hold across the entire subject sample.

Subjects

Ten subjects were employed. Six were female, four male; ages ranged from eighteen to twenty-six. Seven subjects were students, one was a secretary, one was a factory purchasing manager, and one was unemployed. All ten were contacted initially because of their demonstrated excellence as subjects, either in hypnosis research carried out at Stanford University, or at the privately-run Hypnosis Workshop in Menlo Park, California.

Potential subjects were asked about the extent of their knowledge of the hypnosis research literature, and only those subjects who indicated no such knowledge were selected. Each of the selected subjects agreed to participate in the three session experiment without pay, because the exploration of very deep hypnosis interested him. After having agreed to participate, each subject was then informed he would be paid five dollars for each session. By using this procedure, subjects who were genuinely interested in the research were selected.

Specific hypnotic histories varied quite widely for the subjects; the "Consciousness History" section of the Results chapter details this variation. To give illustration here, profiles of three of the subjects are presented below.

One subject was given training two years ago in the Stanford University behavioral laboratory context, where she was rated a very "high susceptible." She has since continued to develop her ability, using hypnosis several times monthly for analgesic purposes: to block out headache pain, menstrual cramp pain, etc. She also used hypnosis to make unpleasant people "disappear." While she is extremely adept at entering hypnosis quickly and using it effectively in the above situations, she knows no hypnotic theory and has not done any other kinds of work with hypnosis, nor has she tried to "go very deep."

Another subject, the most experienced of the ten, while knowing no hypnotic theory, has been using hypnosis "all of my life. I hypnotize myself at least twice a day." This subject has experientially explored many facets of hypnosis both on her own and in experiments at Stanford University and has "gone very, very deep" many times on her own.

A third subject was trained for about fifteen sessions in an experientially-based hypnosis training course at the Hypnosis Workshop, where he proved a most exceptional subject. However, in the year since, he has used hypnosis only at intervals – in order to relax deeply or to experience an altered state of consciousness.

Set and Setting

In order to establish an atmosphere in which the subjects felt secure enough to go into very deep hypnosis, careful attention was given to set and setting. The sessions were held in the evening, which, in addition to standardizing this variable, guaranteed a very quiet setting and freedom from daytime schedule pressures. The experimental room was uncluttered, the hypnosis chair reclined and was extremely comfortable, the lighting was very low and soft, the subject was aware that all precautions had been taken to prevent anyone from disturbing the experiment once in progress, and, very impor-

tantly, the experimenter sat silently and attentively beside the subject during the entire session.

Trust and understanding between subject and experimenter were extremely important. The subjects were delving into a portion of the depth continuum that was unfamiliar to most of them (as is explained fully in the "Consciousness History" section). That portion was likely to be quite experientially different from ordinary consciousness (and perhaps frightening, at times). Therefore, it was necessary for the subjects to feel that the experimenter had the necessary expertise to give the subject any aid that might be required, and that the experimenter would hold the subject's welfare paramount.

Great care was taken to establish rapport between subject and experimenter. Before beginning the experiment, the subject was talked with in a warm, friendly fashion for a substantial period of time. These friendly talks were repeated often during the three session procedure. The atmosphere of the experimental situation was quite informal (for example, E wore no lab coat), and E was of approximately the same age as the subjects.

The sessions were structured in a completely non-demanding manner: There were no time constraints of any kind (the session could go as long as S wanted), and S was not required to experience anything in particular or even to sink deep if he did not feel completely comfortable about doing so. Finally, S trusted that E would be present all during the session and would be always attentive to S. In the judgment of this author, only because this extensive care was taken was very deep hypnosis achieved.

Procedure

The letters subdividing this section refer to the flow charts, figures A, B, and C. Copies of the forms referred to can be found in Appendix A.

Figure A – Session One	
A	S completes Expectations form
B	Pre-briefing
C	Session; transcript, and interval tests
D	S completes Supplementary Session Report form
E	S completes Experience and Depth Scale form
F	Post-briefing

* * *

Figure B – Session Two	
G	S completes History of Consciousness form
H	Pre-briefing
I	Session; transcript, and interval tests
J	S completes Supplementary Session Report-2 form
K	S completes Experience Placement form
L	Post-briefing

* * *

Figure C – Session Three: EEG	
M	Pre-briefing
N	Session
O	Post-briefing
P	After all data collected, a group discussion of experiment and results: S's, in group, presented with results, and asked to discuss experiment and result interpretation.

* * *

A) When the subject first entered the laboratory, he was asked to describe his expectations for very deep hypnosis and how he came to hold them.

B) The subject was then pre-briefed at length, in order to further establish rapport between S and E, and to make the subject completely comfortable and at ease. To avoid bias, a standard pre-briefing was used. The following points were especially stressed:

1. S is the experimenter as much as E. S should agree to participate only if he is genuinely curious and open about very deep hypnosis. No deceit will be practiced on S; S will fully understand what is being measured, and will be fully informed of and asked to discuss the results.
2. A this is an exploratory experiment, with no pre-existing hypotheses that must be proved, E is totally open about the results. E has no strong expectations about very deep hypnosis; he will be happy with any experiences S reports. E is attempting to place no implicit demands on S.
3. S should place no demands on himself and should, as E, have no expectations for what very deep hypnosis is like. This means letting those expectations given on the Expectations form become unimportant. It means forgetting everything S knows about hypnosis except how to go deeper.
4. S should just sink deep and let whatever happens happen. He should not impose pre-conceptions, expectations, or demands on the experience.
5. S is taught the depth scale and how to use it.

6. Every so often, E will ask for a depth report and a description of what S is experiencing. S will communicate succinctly and to the best of his ability what he is experiencing, and will then continue just going deeper or remaining very deep in hypnosis.

C) The session itself then began. The subject was seated in a very comfortable reclining chair in a quiet, dimly lit room. E sat about five feet away from the subject, facing him, and remained near him and attentive to him throughout the session. As the subject closed his eyes and drifted deep into hypnosis by his own devices (some S's preferred to be "started" by E counting from one to twenty), E occasionally asked for S's depth, and then asked a neutral question such as "what are you experiencing now?" E questioned S every five minutes,[1] except at those points where S gave evidence of being disturbed enough by having to communicate to prevent the attainment of his most profound depth. In this case, a longer interval (usually ten minutes) was allowed between questions. At very early points in the session, if S was proceeding deep very quickly, E questioned S more frequently than every five minutes, in order to obtain at least a small amount of data on S's less-than-very-deep experiences. The entire session was recorded, and many sample transcripts are included in Appendix B. [Appendix B is not included in this reprint – Editor.]

[1] When S talked for an abnormally long time in answer to a question, five full minutes of silence were allowed *from the time he finished his reply*. If E felt it important to do so – most often for clarification of a previous report – he introduced a question when less than five minutes had elapsed. If E counted S into hypnosis at the beginning of the session, he allowed one minute of silence to ensue before asking for the first depth and experiential report.

After the subject gave several reports below depth 40, the first five minute interval estimation test was administered. The interval was administered when, in E's judgment (and, in the case of the second session, in light of E's knowledge of S's first session performance), S had achieved a depth at or close to the deepest he would report.

After the subject gave many depth reports indicating he had leveled off at a particular depth, or after he began to consistently report lighter depths than he had been reporting earlier in the session, he was asked to come to depth 20 and to remain there. E's feeling for the time course of the session, E's concern for S's comfort and welfare, and, in the case of the second session, E's knowledge of S's first session performance, contributed to the decision to ask S to return to depth 20.[2]

The second five minute interval estimation test was then administered at depth 20. The subject was then asked to awaken himself completely.[3] (All subjects reported they felt at least a little different than normal after awakening – some indicated that to feel completely normal required several hours.)

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[2] It could be logically argued that the following artifact is possible: E lets S stay very deep until S runs out of experiences, and says he experiences nothing; E scores this as an interesting report (see the Results chapter), and asks S to return to depth 20.

The data clearly indicate that this artifact was not present. With reference to the Illustrative Session Transcripts of Appendix B: in subject five-session one, subject six-session one, and subject ten-session two, S's report "blankness, voidness, nothing happens, etc.," quickly, as soon as they reach profound depths, rather than at the end of their very deep periods. Additionally, in subject five-session two and subject four-session one, the S's frequently move up and down, alternating between varied experiences and "nothing happening, etc."

D) S completed the Supplementary Session Report form, which asked for a description of any experiences not completely sampled by the questions during the session. In addition to its sampling function, this instrument was designed to prove useful in understanding and clarifying brief or sketchy in-session reports.

E) S completed the Experience and Depth Scale form. This instrument asked the subject, based only on the session just completed, to label points on the depth scale with experiences that occurred there. This form was essentially a blank page, with subjects free to use entirely their own wording in describing their experiences.

F) A casual, friendly discussion with S assessed his attitude toward the session and further established rapport with E. S was then thanked and asked very strongly not to talk at all (and not to think much) about the session, in order to avoid forming expectations or pre-conceptions for the next session, and so that other not-yet tested subjects could not possibly hear about his experiences. (All subjects were unknown to each other.) The subject was then thanked and released until the next session.

[3] It would have been optimal to fully counterbalance this test by applying the light interval first in half the cases, and second in the others. However, it was found that asking the subjects to remain lightly hypnotized for a while prior to sinking deep proved too great a discomfiture and impediment to them. Therefore, in all cases, the deep interval test was administered first – soon after the subject entered very deep hypnosis – and the light interval duration estimation was obtained second – near the end of the hypnotic session, when it was possible (although still a strain for the subjects) to ask each subject to remain at about depth 20 for a while.

G) When S reported for his second session, he first completed the History of Consciousness form. This instrument tapped how he had first learned hypnosis, what he used it for, etc., as well as what other states of consciousness he practiced.

H) The pre-briefing for the second session closely resembled that for the first. Especially stressed was treating the second session as a second exploration of deep hypnosis *independent* of the first. S was asked not to harken back to the first session at all, but to enter the second session with, again, no expectations.

I) The second session itself took exactly the same form as the first. The interval estimation tests were included, as they had been in the first session.

Using two similar sessions yielded much more data than only one would have, and provided opportunities for checking consistency of experience for each subject from session to session. It also provided the opportunity for those subjects who might be slightly frightened in their first session (either by participating in the experiment or by the novelty of their very deep experiences) to experience a second, and hence more familiar, session.

J) After awakening, the subject completed the Supplementary Session Report-2 form, which asked for elaboration on anything in the session not adequately tapped by the verbal report format.

K) S next completed the Experience Placement form. On this form were listed all the experiences pilot subjects had reported in very deep hypnosis, many probable important experiences of lighter depths, and all other experiences E

felt might occur very deep. S was asked to indicate if each experience occurred, and if it did, at what depth(s). He was also questioned about what non-listed experiences occurred.

L) The post-briefing, as for the first session, consisted of an informal talk, a strong caution about talking about the experiment, and a "thank you."

M) The third (EEG) session was introduced with a pre-briefing which was quite similar to those for the first and second sessions. Any fears about the electrodes or apparatus were assuaged at length; all subjects reported feeling comfortable. The subject was told that the form of the session would be just as it had been for the previous two sessions. He was also told to experience this session completely independently of the other two, to once again have no expectations, and that E, as before, had none.

N) The session took the same form as the previous two with five major differences:

1. No transcript was produced, but E instead made brief notes summarizing each verbal report.
2. S had electrodes pasted to his scalp in several places.[4]
3. E's assistant was in the next (soundproof) room operating the EEG equipment.

[4] In general, the terminology and apparatus used conform to that described at length by Macdonald and Nowlis (1969). Basic equipment included a Grass Model 7 Polygraph and a Krohn-Hite Model 330B Band-Pass Filter. Electrode voltage comparisons included: a vertex-ear reading, where vertex is defined as the crown of the head directly above the ears; an occipital-ear reading, where the occipital electrode was placed two centimeters to the right of center; and a vertex-occipital reading. In all cases a low forehead electrode served as ground. The variable band-pass filter provided clear displays of rhythmic activity in any target Hertz (cycles per second) range.

4. The interval estimation test was not included.
5. Baseline readings were taken just before S entered hypnosis, and just after he awoke from hypnosis at the end of the session.

O) As in previous sessions, S was cautioned not to talk of the experiment (until the meeting in group), and was sincerely thanked for cooperating.

P) After all the subjects had experienced the three sessions, they were brought together to discuss the experiment and offer opinions and advice pertinent to interpreting the results. At this point, they were also released from keeping silent about the experiment. The subjects were most interested in the results, very happy to help speculate about them, and relieved to be released to think about and discuss the experiment further.

Results

The Experiences

The data answer two major questions: what experiences are reported in very deep hypnosis, and is there inter-subject consistency of report?

The left-hand column of Figure D charts the data generated by the Experience Placement form. This form is of central importance since it provides subjects, after their deep hypnotic sessions, with the opportunity to fully represent their experiences. The form is not bound by limitations of the session procedure itself: during the session communication is difficult, and, of necessity, a sampling-at-intervals procedure is used.

When subjects completed the Experience Placement form, they indicated depth by letters, as follows:

If depth number is between	Use letter:
0 and 10	A
10 and 20	B
20 and 30	C
30 and 40	D
	E
	F
Maximum depth	G

.....

Note that letters E, F, and G were reserved for the very deep region, with subjects free to divide the region into three areas in the way they felt was most illustrative.

Reports on the Experience Placement side of Figure D are divided, for chi-square testing purposes, into three regions: depth A-C, C-E, and E-G (for more detail on scoring, see "Remarks on Figure D").

It can be seen that consistent replies to the Experience Placement form are given by the independent subjects; for most experiences, there exists very good agreement about where on the depth continuum a particular experience occurs. For example, "loss of touch with body" is reported as occurring on the very deep section of the continuum by 10 out of 10 subjects ($X2 = 20.00$, $p < .001$). It is possible to group experiences into five major groups: experiences characteristic of light and moderate hypnosis, of moderate and deep hypnosis, of very deep hypnosis, not localized to any one region of the depth scale or not agreed upon, and not typically experienced. It should be remembered that the Experience Placement form was set up to list only experiences particularly characteristic of depths light through

deep, while all experiences that were likely to occur in very deep hypnosis were listed.

In scoring the sessions themselves (to generate the data for the Sessions side of Figure D), lettering was done to correspond with the Experience Placement form lettering. For example, a report given at depth 27 was scored as being in area C (thus, the three columns on the Sessions side of Figure D are actually regions A-C, C-E, and E-G, and exactly correspond to those on the Experience Placement side of the figure). The area between 40 and the greatest depth reported by each subject in either session was divided into thirds, and the letters E, F, and G were assigned to the thirds. This normalized the scaling, which varied widely above 40 from subject to subject (see Appendix B, illustrative session transcripts [not included in this reprint]): it allowed a subject who reported 300 as deepest to be directly compared to one who reported a maximum depth of 90. From the remarkable across-subject consistency of experience-at-depth reports (see especially the graphs in Appendix C) [not included in this transcript – Editor], it appears that the implicit assumption underlying this procedure – that all subjects would reach approximately the same experiential deepest area – was borne out.

The right-hand column displays the results of the sampling procedure used during the sessions themselves. The experiences analyzed are those reported verbally by the subjects during the time the hypnosis was in progress (see Appendix B for illustrative session transcripts [not included in this reprint]). Experiences are divided into the five major depth groups; and it can be seen that a good correspondence exists between the Experience Placement form reports and the sessions themselves (the discussion below of Figure D, Part 2, makes this point at greater length). "Loss of knowledge of your individual identity," for example, is placed in very deep hypnosis by all 7 subjects who report it on the Experience Placement form, and in that same section of the depth continuum by all 5 of the subjects who report it during the ses-

sions themselves. Experiences not listed on the Experience Placement forms, but which were mentioned at least several times in the sessions themselves, are listed in the appropriate depth group.

[**Editor's note:** For easier reading as an ebook, Figure D has been redrawn into two tables. In Figure D part 1, the first table is "Reports from the Experience Placement Forms." The second table is "Reports from the Sessions."]

Reports from the Experience Placement Forms

Number of subjects who reported that the experience occurs in light-moderate hypnosis, moderate-deep hypnosis, or very deep hypnosis on the experience placement form.

Figure D— Part One
Experimental Results

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30; A-C on rating form)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+; C-E on rating form)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40; E-G on rating form)	Chi-square
Very deep experiences:				
absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.	0	0	10	x^2=20.00 p<.001
voidness	0	0	10	x^2=20.00 p<.001
difficulty in talking	0	0	10	x^2=20.00 p<.001
loss of touch with body	0	0	10	x^2=20.00 p<.001
feeling oneness with everything	0	0	10	x^2=18.00 p<.001
blankness	0	0	9	x^2=18.00 p<.001

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30; A-C on rating form)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+; C-E on rating form)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40; E-G on rating form)	Chi-square
nothing happening	0	1	9	x^2=14.60 p<.001
loss of knowledge of your individual identity	0	0	7	x^2=14.00 p<.001
no "self" or "ego"	0	0	7	x^2=14.00 p<.001
being everything	0	0	7	x^2=14.00 p<.001
no sense of time	0	0	7	x^2=14.00 p<.001
thoughts widely spaced	0	1	8	x^2=12.67 p<.01
subconscious thoughts and images	0	1	8	x^2=12.67 p<.01
complete loss of touch with external environment (room, etc.)	0	1	7	x^2=10.75 p<.01
occasional isolated images	0	1	7	x^2=10.75 p<.01
feeling totally spread out	0	1	7	x^2=10.75 p<.01
partial loss of touch with external environment	0	0	5	x^2=10.00 p<.01
feelings of joy	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
separating of parts of the mind	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
great darkness	0	2	6	x^2=7.00 p<.05
thinking in images rather than words	0	2	6	x^2=7.00 p<.05
feeling of floating	0	2	6	x^2=7.00 p<.05

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30; A-C on rating form)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+; C-E on rating form)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40; E-G on rating form)	Chi-square
feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head	0	1	5	x^2=7.00 p<.05
spontaneous auditory experiences	1	0	3	x^2=3.50 ns
profound personal or philosophical insights	1	0	3	x^2=3.50 ns
great brightness	0	2	2	x^2=2.00 ns
pictures and images	1	1	2	x^2=.50 ns
Light to moderate experiences:				
normal verbal thinking	10	0	0	x^2=20.00 p<.001
worries	4	0	1	x^2=6.60 p<.05
ideas	4	2	0	x^2=4.00 ns
Moderate to deep experiences:				
wavelike phenomena	0	5	1	x^2=7.00 p<.05
simple motion images	1	4	0	x^2=5.20 p<.10
flashes of light or color	0	3	2	x^2=2.80 ns
memories	2	3	1	x^2=1.00 ns
hypersensitivity of body	1	2	1	x^2=.50 ns
simple images	1	2	2	x^2=.40 ns

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30; A-C on rating form)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+; C-E on rating form)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40; E-G on rating form)	Chi-square
Experiences not localized to any one region of the depth scale or about which there was no agreement:				
				Reports of a wide range of occurrence:
feeling relaxed	0	0	0	9
feeling calm and quiet	1	2	2	5
feeling of being in a trance	1	1	1	5
hearing music	1	0	0	2
empathy with hypnotist	2	0	2	2
emotional experiences	3	1	3	1
Experiences reported infrequently:				
feelings of anguish or pain	1	0	0	
judgment	1	1	0	
dreams	1	0	1	
spiritual or religious experiences	0	1	1	
feelings of power	0	0	2	

Reports from the Sessions

Number of subjects who reported that the experience occurs in light-moderate hypnosis, moderate-deep hypnosis, or very deep hypnosis during the hypnosis sessions.

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40)	Chi-square (where N is sufficiently large)
Very deep experiences:				
voidness; blankness; absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.; nothing happening; being nothing	0	1	13	x^2=22.43 p<.001
difficulty in talking	all	all	all	all
loss of touch with body	0	2	7	x^2=8.67 p<.05
feeling oneness with everything; being everything	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
no “self” or “ego”; loss of knowledge of your individual identity	0	0	5	x^2=10.00 p<.01
no sense of time	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
subconscious thoughts and images	Can’t score	Can’t score	Can’t score	Can’t score
process of dissolving or spreading out; mind leaving body and spreading	0	0	6	x^2=12.00 p<.01
warmth or cold	0	0	6	x^2=12.00 p<.01
thoughts widely spaced; occasional isolated images	0	3	5	x^2=4.75 p<.10
feeling totally spread out	0	0	3	x^2=6.00 p<.05
partial or complete loss of touch with external environment (room, etc.)	0	0	2	
totally real and (relatively) long-term spontaneous hallucinations involving all sensory modalities, i.e., other realities	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
feelings of joy	0	0	0	
separating of parts of the mind	0	0	1	
great darkness	0	0	2	
feeling of floating (body or mind)	0	0	4	x^2=8.00 p<.05
feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head	0	0	2	

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40)	Chi-square (where N is sufficiently large)
mind fully separated and physically	0	0	3	x^2=6.00 p<.05
feeling totally inside one's head	0	0	3	x^2=6.00 p<.05
spontaneous auditory experiences	0	0	2	x^2=6.00 p<.05
profound personal or philosophical insights	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score
great brightness	0	0	1	
clairvoyance; telepathy; joining another mind; presence of another	0	1	2	x^2=2.00 n.s.
Light to moderate experiences:				
normal verbal thinking	0	0	0	
worries	0	0	0	
ideas	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score
Moderate to deep experiences:				
wavelike phenomena	0	3	1	x^2=3.50 n.s.
simple motion images	0	2	3	x^2=2.80 n.s.
flashes of light or color; dots of light or color; color alone	0	2	5	x^2=5.43 p<.10
memories	0	0	1	
hypersensitivity of body	0	0	1	
thinking in images rather than words; pictures and images; simple images	0	4	3	x^2=3.71 n.s
Experiences not localized to any one region of the depth scale or about which there was no agreement:				
				Reports of a wide range of occurrence:
feeling relaxed; feeling calm and quiet	0	3	2	0
feeling of being in a trance	0	0	0	0

Hypnotic Experience	Light-moderate hypnosis (depth 0-30)	Moderate-deep hypnosis (depth 20-40+)	Very deep hypnosis (depth over 40)	Reports of a wide range of occurrence
hearing music	0	1	1	0
empathy with hypnotist	0	0	0	0
emotional experiences	0	1	3	0
Experiences reported infrequently:				
feelings of anguish or pain	0	0	0	
judgment	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score	
dreams	0	0	1	
heaviness of body	0	1	1	
synesthesia	0	1	1	
spiritual or religious experiences	Can't score	Can't score	Can't score	
pulsating	0	0	1	
feeling that arms are very large	0	0	2	
feeling afraid	0	0	2	
feelings of power	0	0	0	
becoming a particular inanimate object	0	0	2	
feeling totally free	0	0	2	

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Remarks on Figure D, Part One:

a. Chi-square is calculated in all cases where the expected frequency in each cell is equal to or exceeds 1. This is according to recent findings described in Snedecor and Cochran, 1967.
b. It should be noted that the left-hand portion of the figure [Reports from the Experiential Placement Form] refers to 10 reports total, one for each subject, while the right-hand portion [Reports form the Sessions] draws from 20 sessions where reports are possible.

c. Note that experiences are ordered within major depth classifications (such as "moderate-deep hypnosis") with regard to how strongly characteristic they are of that depth range. This does not necessarily correspond to their distribution by depth within that major depth range; for complete ordering, see the list in the main text body.
d. In order to put them in scoreable form, some Experience Placement items are combined in the session portion of the figure; it is clear where this has been done. Also, some Experience Placement items, not unambiguously and objectively scoreable, are labeled as such in lieu of scores.
e. Each report, whether from form or session, was scored in the depth category in which it best fit; in the case of equal fit in two categories (for example, a report of "C" only), the report was not scored. This happened fairly frequently; complete data can be seen in Appendix C [not included in this transcript – Editor]. An exception was made for experiences which were habitually reported as characteristic of a large portion of the depth scale; these, as well as those where no agreement at all was evident, are given a major category to themselves. For complete and ungrouped data, see Appendix C.
f. Chi-square is calculated using the three depth region columns, with the expected frequency in all cases being a third of the total number of reports. For example, "voidness" shows ten reports total, with the observed frequencies being 0-0-10, and the expected frequencies being 3.33-3.33-3.33.

Figure D, Part Two
Experiences Ordered by Depth

	Reports From the Experience Placement Forms		Reports From the Sessions	
Experience	Mean depth rating (and number of subjects reporting the experience)	Rank	Mean depth rating (and number of sessions for reported)	Rank
being everything	6.86 (7)	1	6.60 (5)	3
feeling oneness with everything	6.61 (9)			
blankness	6.56 (9)			
loss of knowledge of your individual identity	6.56 (8)	2	6.67 (6)	2
absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.	6.50 (10)	3	6.12 (17)	7
voidness	6.45 (10)			
no “self” or “ego”	6.43 (7)			
nothing happening	6.30 (10)			
difficulty in talking	6.25 (10)			
totally real and (relatively) long-term hallucinations involving all sensory modalities, i.e., other realities			6.20 (5)	
feeling totally free			6.17 (3)	
complete loss of touch with external environment (room, etc.)	6.11 (9)			
feeling of motion			6.07 (7)	
feeling totally spread out	6.00 (8)	4	7.00 (3)	1
mind fully separated and physically distant from body			6.00 (4)	
thoughts widely spaced	6.00 (9)	5	5.55 (11)	13
subconscious thoughts and images	6.00 (9)			
process of dissolving or spreading out; mind leaving body and spreading			5.94 (8)	
warmth or cold			5.91 (11)	
feeling totally inside one’s head			5.88 (4)	
loss of touch with body	5.85 (10)	6	5.54 (12)	14
occasional isolated images	5.81 (8)			

	Reports From the Experience Placement Forms		Reports From the Sessions	
Experience	Mean depth rating (and number of subjects reporting the experience)	Rank	Mean depth rating (and number of sessions for reported)	Rank
great darkness	5.78 (9)	7	6.17 (3)	5
no sense of time	5.72 (9)	8	6.50 (4)	4
feeling afraid			5.67 (3)	
feeling that arms are very			5.67 (3)	
thinking in images rather than words	5.50 (10)			
feeling of joy	5.33 (6)			
separating of parts of the mind	5.29 (7)			
partial loss of touch with external environment	5.15 (10)	9	5.75 (4)	8
feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head	5.12 (8)	10	6.17 (3)	6
great brightness	5.06 (8)			
feeling of floating	5.05 (10)	11	5.70 (5)	9
clairvoyance; telepathy; joining another mind; presence of another			5.00 (4)	
profound personal or philosophical insights	4.75 (4)			
feeling calm and quiet	4.70 (10)	12	4.67 (9)	20
heaviness of body			4.60 (5)	
spontaneous auditory experiences	4.57 (7)	13	5.25 (4)	16
flashes of light or color	4.50 (9)	14	5.50 (10)	15
pictures and images	4.39 (9)	15	5.15 (10)	17
wavelike phenomena	4.36 (7)	16	4.80 (5)	19
feeling relaxed	4.35 (10)			
hypersensitivity of body	4.29 (7)	17	5.67 (3)	11
emotional experiences	4.12 (8)	18	5.70 (5)	10
simple images	4.11 (9)			
feeling of being in a trance	4.06 (9)			
simple motion images	4.00 (8)	19	5.67 (6)	12
dreams	4.00 (3)			
empathy with hypnotist	3.93 (7)			

	Reports From the Experience Placement Forms		Reports From the Sessions	
Experience	Mean depth rating (and number of subjects reporting the experience)	Rank	Mean depth rating (and number of sessions for reported)	Rank
hearing music	3.83 (6)	20	4.83	18
memories	3.38 (8)			
ideas	2.62 (8)			
worries	2.50 (6)			
normal verbal thinking	1.45 (10)			

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Rank-order correlations (Spearman's rho):

rho=.67
significance of rho:
t=3.55 d.f.=18
p<.01 (two-tailed)

Remarks on Figure D, Part Two:

a. How the mean depth rating was obtained: the raw data (graphed in Appendix C) [not included in this transcript – Editor] were scored by assigning depth region A the value 1, B the value 2, and so forth, up to G's value of 7. The median rating was obtained for each subject or session, and then a mean of the medians was taken. For example, the "feeling oneness with everything" Experience Placement graph was scored as:

Medians – 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 5.5, 5.5, 7, none, 6.5
Mean – 59.5 ÷ 9 = 6.61

b. Only experiences that appeared on the Experience Placement form and were reported (three times or more) during the sessions were ranked. This procedure was followed so that the rank-order correlation could be computed between the two data sources.

c. Experiences were depth-ordered with regard to their Experience Placement form mean depth ratings. For experiences not listed on the Experience Placement form, the sessions mean depth ratings were used.

d. When several experiences were grouped for session scoring purposes (experiences so treated are evident from the first part of this figure or from Appendix C graphs) [not included in this transcript – Editor], their sessions mean depth rating was recorded (and the rank assigned) adjacent to the experience in the group with the median Experience Placement mean depth rating. For example, the sessions mean depth rating for the group "thinking in images rather than words; pictures and images; simple images" is 5.15, and it was recorded next to Experience Placement "pictures and images" (4.39), which is the median between the 5.50 for "thinking in images rather than words" and the 4.11 for "simple images." In the case of four values from which to choose a median, the higher middle value was arbitrarily and consistently chosen.

It should be realized that subjects proceeded deep into hypnosis quickly, and that this resulted in a dearth of in-session reports at the light and medium sections of the depth scale. This lack is partly compensated by the data generated by the Experience and Depth Scale form, administered after the first session. Data from this form are displayed graphically in Appendix C.

Appendix C [not included in this transcript – Editor] should be well studied; it contains all the experiential data in graph form. This data display permits ready grasp of the pattern of results.

Figure D, part 2, orders all experiences by depth. See "Remarks on Figure D, part 2" for the procedure followed in doing so. The figures also provide a numerical method of checking the correspondence between the reports from the Experience Placement forms and the Reports from the session transcripts. The rank-order correlation between the two types of report is .67, significant at the .01 level.

Inspection of the first page of Figure D, part 2, shows that three experience groups are characteristic of the most profound depths reported by the subjects. "Being everything; feeling oneness with everything" has the highest mean depth rating, followed by – at about the same depth – "blankness; absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.; voidness; nothing happening" and "loss of knowledge of your individual identify; no self or ego." These three experience groups are especially interesting in their implications; they will be discussed further in the "Discussion" chapter.

Electroencephalographic Results

Electroencephalography succeeded in revealing differences between waking and very deep hypnotic EEG patterns.

Figure E displays two highly interesting results. First, an inspection of column b shows little EEG change from the awake resting baseline of column a. Since column b taps what is normally considered to be deep hypnosis, the result here reported replicates all those studies discussed earlier which find no difference between waking and hypnotized electroencephalograms.

Figure E
Electroencephalographic Results

Subject	a. Eyes closed resting baseline, prior to hypnosis	b. In what is normally termed deep hypnosis, while going deeper	c. In very deep hypnosis
One	Experience of resting; high amplitude EEG; frequent short 11 cps (alpha) sinusoidal rhythmicities (hereafter called "regularities"), mainly occipital in location	Experiences of floating, calm, a few thoughts; EEG amplitude greatly increased, due to higher amplitude, more continuous 11 cps alpha regularities	Experiences of blankness, unity with the universe, incomprehensible darkness; very high amplitude continuous (long) 11 cps alpha regularities alternating with marked EEG amplitude diminution periods (to less than 50 microvolts, 1/3 to 1/4 the size of S's typical very deep EEG)
Two	High amplitude, continuous, predominant 10 cps alpha regularities	Experiences of visual patterns and some thoughts; alpha regularities less continuous than at baseline	Experience of soft blue "sun" rising; EEG of lower amplitude than baseline level, with 10 cps alpha regularities of lower amplitude than baseline level; occasional short marked EEG amplitude diminution periods at both vertex and occipital loci

Subject	d. At depth 20, after coming directly upward from very deep hypnosis (subjects found it hard to stay at depth 20; they reported a tendency to slip deeper)	e. Eyes closed resting, after coming completely out of hypnosis (subjects reported feeling an altered state of consciousness, with some tendency to slip back onto hypnosis)	f. Marked effects
One	EEG amplitude has returned to initial baseline size; 11 cps alpha regularities have decreased in amplitude and length (continuity) to baseline level; no theta regularities	Amplitude of EEG up somewhat from initial baseline and depth 20 levels; higher amplitude–but not more continuous than at depth 20–11 cps alpha regularities	At depth, striking EEG amplitude diminutions alternating with very large long alpha and theta regularities

Two	EEG amplitude up to about halfway between very deep and initial baseline levels	EEG amplitude at initial baseline level; very long (15 seconds) continuous 10 cps alpha regularities	At depth, EEG amplitude lower than preceding and following levels, with marked short EEG amplitude diminution periods seen simultaneously at both vertex and occipital loci

Subject	a. Eyes closed resting baseline, prior to hypnosis	b. In what is normally termed deep hypnosis, while going deeper	c. In very deep hypnosis
Three	Low amplitude EEG; small, continuous 10 cps alpha regularities	Experiences of heaviness of body, falling, a song, and watching self sing; alpha regularities less continuous than at baseline	Experiences of nothingness, no relation to here and yet every relation to it, total involvement, no objectivity; EEG amplitude down with apparent skewing of activity toward delta (0-4 cps) range, although no regularities in this range were observed; very long striking EEG amplitude diminution periods (one of 60 seconds, continuous duration), in which EEG amplitude decreases to below 10 microvolts from both vertex and occipital loci; short theta regularities; very occasional 10 cps alpha regularities
Four	10 cps alpha regularities of varying continuity	Experiences of seeing a jackrabbit and being in a foam environment; 10 cps alpha activity less predominant than during baseline period; appearance of a small amount of 8 cps theta regularity from vertex	Experiences of being totally spread out, black nothingness, true reality, complete potential, understanding of important patterns in people's lives, experiencing several points in history; long continuous periods of striking EEG amplitude diminution, interrupted by 10 cps alpha regularities from the occipital locus or 8 cps theta regularities from the vertex locus

Subject	d. At depth 20, after coming directly upward from very deep hypnosis	e. Eyes closed resting, after coming completely out of hypnosis	f. Marked effects
Three	EEG amplitude increased to close to initial baseline level; frequent short 10 cps alpha regularities of higher amplitude than those during initial baseline period	EEG amplitude, alpha regularities at initial baseline levels	At depth, EEG amplitude decreased with apparent skewing of activity toward slower frequencies; very long continuous EEG amplitude diminution periods from both loci
Four	10 cps alpha regularities increase in frequency to baseline level; regularities more continuous than during initial baseline	EEG similar to initial baseline, with difference being the persisting presence of 8 cps theta regularities	At depth, marked EEG amplitude diminution periods of long duration; 8 cps theta regularities appearing as S goes deeper, and persist throughout the remainder of the session

Subject	a. Eyes closed resting baseline, prior to hypnosis	b. In what is normally termed deep hypnosis, while going deeper	c. In very deep hypnosis
Five	EEG amplitude small; 10 cps moderately frequent alpha regularities of short duration	Experience of mind being with a friend after having left body; no EEG changes	Experiences of body totally exploded, voidness; EEG amplitude less than baseline, with small 10 cps alpha regularities of more continuity but occurring less frequently than during baseline
Six	Large predominant continuous 10 cps alpha regularities at occipital; predominant continuous 8 cps theta regularities from vertex	Experiences of heavy body, feeling blood flow in arms, arms numb; less 8 cps theta regularities; short 6-7 cps theta regularities	Experiences of nothing, blankness, contentment, heaviness, coldness; EEG amplitude greatly decreased from baseline; 8 cps vertex regularities and 10 cps occipital regularities still present, but of lower amplitude than at baseline; 6-7 cps theta regularities long continuous (one of 12 seconds duration) marked EEG amplitude diminutions (even compared to the decreased EEG amplitude typically found at depth in this S) from both loci

Subject	d. At depth 20, after coming directly upward from very deep hypnosis	e. Eyes closed resting, after coming completely out of hypnosis	f. Marked effects
Five	EEG amplitude up to initial baseline level; 10 cps alpha regularities less continuous than during baseline	EEG similar to initial baseline readings	At depth, EEG amplitude down from baseline level in both loci; characteristics of alpha regularities changed
Six	EEG amplitude up from deep levels but smaller than baseline; 8 and 10 cps regularities; one period of marked EEG amplitude diminution	EEG amplitude at initial baseline level; 8 cps theta regularities from vertex, and 10 cps alpha regularities from occipital, these last much more continuous that at initial baseline	At depth, EEG amplitude greatly decreased from baseline level; striking periods of EEG amplitude diminution at depth; 8 cps theta activity from vertex throughout

Subject	a. Eyes closed resting baseline	b. In what is normally termed deep hypnosis, while going deeper	c. In very deep hypnosis
Seven	EEG amplitude very small (less than 20 microvolts from both locations); minimal regular activity could be seen	Experience of being weightless	Experience of blankness, nothing
Eight	EEG amplitude very large; very large continuous 9 cps alpha regularities; a few short 5 cps theta regularities	Experience of reliving a funeral and feeling grief; no EEG changes	Experiences of blending into everything, being everything, and feeling a circle; marked EEG amplitude diminution periods of short duration; 5 cps theta regularities of short duration; possible small EEG amplitude diminution as compared to baseline
Nine	Infrequent 10 cps alpha regularities of small amplitude; EEG amplitude quite small	Experiences of clear mind, proceeding deeper; 10 cps alpha regularities still occasionally present	Experiences of going beyond the light, total freedom, happiness, peace, calm; virtually no alpha regularities, EEG amplitude, especially at occipital locus, much decreased from baseline level; periods of striking EEG amplitude diminution

Subject	d. At depth 20, after coming directly upward from very deep hypnosis	e. Eyes closed resting, after coming completely out of hypnosis	f. Marked effects
Seven			EEG amplitude so small throughout that no changes in amplitude, or regularities, could be discerned
Eight	Short 5 cps theta regularities	EEG identical to initial baseline	At depth, marked EEG amplitude diminution periods
Nine	EEG amplitude up to near baseline level; more 10 cps alpha regular periods than deep, but less than baseline	Experience of having gone too deep to be able to leave hypnosis, except by a process taking much time; consequently, no readings obtained here	At depth, striking EEG amplitude diminution periods; also complete disappearance of 10 cps alpha regularities

Subject	a. Eyes closed resting baseline, prior to hypnosis	b. In what is normally termed deep hypnosis, while going deeper	c. In very deep hypnosis
Ten	9-10 cps medium amplitude frequent continuous alpha regularities at occipital locus; 8-9 cps frequent theta regularities at vertex	Experiences of mostly darkness, flashes of light; no EEG changes	Experiences of nothing, darkness; EEG amplitude lower than at baseline; 9-10 cps and 8-9 cps regularities still present; long periods of marked EEG amplitude diminution

Subject	d. At depth 20, after coming directly upward from very deep hypnosis	e. Eyes closed resting, after coming completely out of hypnosis	f. Marked effects
Ten	EEG amplitude higher than during very deep periods, but lower than during initial baseline	EEG amplitude up, but not quite at initial level; 9-10 cps alpha regularities and 8-9 cps theta regularities still present	8-9 cps theta regularities from the vertex locus appear throughout; at depth, EEG amplitude down, with periods of marked amplitude diminution

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Subject numbering was changed for the electroencephalographic portion of the research in the following manner:

Subject number during experiential phase	Subject number during electroencephalographic phase
1	4
2	9
3	3
4	5
5	1
6	6
7	10
8	8
9	7
10	2

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However, the data in column c, very deep hypnosis (and as summarized in column f), lead to a much more interesting conclusion. In five of the ten subjects, very deep hypnosis was clearly accompanied by a consistent global decrease in EEG amplitude. In eight of the ten subjects, there were periods during the very deep hypnosis phase which were characterized by even more dramatic

global diminution in EEG amplitude. These diminution periods involved a dropping out of high voltage slow (12 cycles per second and under) activity. Typically, almost all that could be readily distinguished during the diminution periods was irregular, low voltage, fast (13 cycles per second and over) activity; determination of whether such activity increased, decreased, or was simply unmasked while remaining at its usual level awaits a more complex filtering system. The duration of the diminution periods varied from less than 2 seconds (the smallest interval in which identification of a definite "period" was possible) to over 60 seconds (the longest interval which it was possible to separate from the typical very deep EEG). Of the two subjects who did not evince the dramatic diminution periods, one had a baseline EEG of such small amplitude that changes were impossible to detect, and the other was judged by E to not have reached an especially deep state. (See Figure G for illustrative actual electroencephalographic displays of these results.) [Figure G, a set of images of EEG recordings, is not included here – Editor.]

Figure F supplements Figure E; the electroencephalographic results were scored by two scorers blind to the purpose of the research and to the depth of the records they were scoring, and actual microvolt figures were generated. Figure F results confirm those of Figure E; decrease (of ten microvolts or over) of the amplitude of the typical very deep EEG in comparison to the baseline was found for six subjects (all except numbers 1, 6, 7, and 8; all except 1 and 7 decreased at least some amount). Specific periods, while very deep, of marked amplitude diminution of ten microvolts or more compared with the typical very deep EEG amplitude were found for seven subjects (all except 5, 7, and 3; who showed a 9.5 microvolt diminution). Comparison of the baseline EEG amplitude with the "lowest periods while very deep" shows a striking diminution for nine of the ten subjects (the anomalous subject, number 7, had a miniscule EEG even at baseline). For the nine subjects who showed the effect, the aver-

age "lowest periods while very deep" reading (16.4 microvolts) was 31.2% of the average baseline amplitude (52.2 microvolts). A t-test between these average readings shows t = 6.61, d.f . = 16, probability less than .001.

Figure F
EEG Amplitude

	Average Amplitude in Microvolts* in:		
Subject	Eyes closed resting waking baseline	Very deep hypnosis	Lowest amplitude periods during very deep hypnosis
1	72.5	122.5	32.5
2	42.5	32.5	11.25
3	37.5	20.0	10.5
4	52.5	35.0	15.0
5	45.0	27.5	20.0
6	60.0	55.0	8.5
7	17.5	21.25	15.0
8	72.5	66.25	22.5
9	32.5	22.5	12.5
10	55.0	40.0	15.0

* each number in this figure is the mean of the ratings of two blind scorers, who each scored amplitude by eyesight estimation of the printed electroencephalographic record at several random points in each appropriate section of the record

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The evidence suggests, therefore, that very deep hypnosis is often characterized by a continuous global decrease in EEG amplitude, and that it is almost always characterized by briefer periods of global EEG amplitude diminution to very low levels.

A Russian scientist, Marenina (as cited in Chertok and Kramarz, 1959) has reported observing the former phenomenon, and offers the opinion that the other electroencephalographic studies did not

probe deeply enough. The lack of other reports of amplitude diminution can perhaps be explained by E's observation that the marked diminution periods typically happen only at the very deepest points of the hypnosis, an area not previously studied electroencephalographically.

Consciousness History and Very Deep Hypnosis Experience

Figure H represents the answers to the Consciousness History form and to the post-session query about whether the subject had been as deep in his previous experience. Eight of the ten subjects stated that the depth of their sessions in this experiment exceeded the depth of any of their many previous hypnosis experiences (three subjects in the "no" group did add a "maybe once before" to their "no"). This is highly significant in the light of the wide experience and demonstrated hypnotic excellence of the subjects. This result should be inspected with reference to the "Set and setting" subsection of the previous chapter, and with regard to the hypnosis literature in general. Depths like those detailed in this research appear to require quite special conditions to become available.

The Consciousness History form yields three especially interesting results. First, the subjects in the experiment use hypnosis quite frequently, and have had much experience with it. The "average" subject uses hypnosis once a week or so, and has been doing so for several years. Second, most of the subjects appear to be somewhat a part of the "new" or "underground" culture in their consciousness habits, but are not at all extreme in those habits. While the average subject does use marijuana once a week to once a month, he either does not use psychedelics or uses them rarely, and he does not meditate in a systematic fashion. Third, the subjects in this experiment rate themselves as quite mentally healthy – mean of 7.5 on a 0-10 unhealthy-to-healthy scale. Only two subjects reported mental health of 5 or below, while seven reported a healthy 8 or above.

The first column indicates what the Consciousness History question was about, for example, experience with hypnosis, meditation, marijuana, etc. Each column with an asterisk over it is a subject. There are five subjects in the first part of the table and five subjects in the second part of the table for a total of ten subjects.

Figure H
Consciousness History and Very Deep Hypnosis Experience

Daily	seven times a week
Very often	two to five times a week
Often	once a week to once a month
Occasionally	once a month to once every three months
Rarely	once every three months to once a year
Very rarely	only a few times total

Subject	*	*	*	*	*
Hypnosis	1½ years often (once every 2-3 weeks)	Whole life daily (twice a day)	1½ years often (once a month)	½ year very often (3-4 times per week)	2 years often
Meditation	no	yes (started recently)	no (once tried)	yes	yes (1 1/2 years)
Marijuana use	often	very often	often	daily	very often
Psychedelic use	very rarely	rarely	occasionally	rarely	occasionally
Spontaneous mystical experiences or ASC	no	yes (an ASC)	yes	yes	yes
Overall Mental health (0-10)	6-7	8	8-9	9	4
Ever been that deep before?	no	yes	no (maybe once)	yes	no (maybe once)

Subject	*	*	*	*	*
Hypnosis	1½ years very often	1 year often	3 years often (minimum 2-3 times per month)	3 years occasionally (very often 2 and 3 years ago)	5 years often (many frequency variations)
Meditation	no	no	no	no	no
Marijuana	no	very often	occasionally	often	occasionally
Psychedelic	no	often	rarely	no	no
Spontaneous mystical experiences or ASC	yes	no	yes	no	no (possibly)
Overall mental health (0-10)	8	5	8	9	9
Ever been that deep before?	no	no (maybe once; no memory of it)	no	no	no

Expectations

Before the subjects were told to minimize their expectations and the role of expectation in the sessions, they were requested to speculate about what very deep hypnosis might be like. Their speculations are shown in Figure I (while they have been condensed into phrases, all expectations that were mentioned on the Expectations form are represented).

Figure I
Expectations

Subject	Expectations
Ten	Separation from body; float in midair; analgesia; total turnoff from external stimuli, almost but not quite sleep
Nine	Extreme relaxation; no tension; warmth, tingly feeling; no outside disturbances; or S can be deep but alert
Eight	Slowing of sensation, perception, respiration; physical drowsiness but mental alertness; mental wall between S and environment; sense of auto-division into two

Seven	**Very relaxed – closer to psychedelic or meditative than normal; almost no recollection of the state**
Six	**Deep relaxation, but awake to E's suggestions, big white cloud, soft, and S in the middle, floating, relaxing, enjoying**
Five	**Nothing I have done or heard about – exploration**
Four	**Go within and find out what you are really about; experience something to fullest extremes and relevance to your life; full control of body and mind; go anyplace; be anything**
Three	**No restrictions (normal, conscious) of time, space, body; total Involvement with whatever happens; new ways to understanding**
Two	**Oblivous to external surroundings; no concept of time or space; more oblivious to self as a physical entity; clear conscious mind; unconscious nearer surface; totally relaxed, much more than when sleeping; different world, some sort of barrier between self and outside**
One	**Nothing; just awareness of yourself; slow; calm; almost omniscient meditation; being buried in a ton of green Jello; no sight, sound, or hearing**

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It should be stressed that subjects took the request to minimize their expectations (after writing them down) quite seriously. Subject two, for example, when asked during her first session, reported not being familiar with the experience of blank mind, although she had been very deep previously, and had mentioned "clear conscious mind" in her expectations (this incident can be found in Appendix B, subject two, session one, illustrative scored transcripts [not included in this reprint]). Upon debriefing, she stated that she had indicated unfamiliarity with the experience of blank mind because her mind set for the session was to experience very deep hypnosis absolutely afresh, without expectations, and so the experience of blank mind really was novel to her.

All subjects – except number five, who could generate no specific expectations – reported that they based their speculations on their

wide experience with hypnosis in general. Two of the subjects – numbers two and four – stated they had been very deep previously (it can be seen that subject two wrote by far the fullest and most accurate set of expectations); the other subjects speculated using their deepest former experiences.

While the expectations that are mentioned tend to be accurate, no subject (except number two) mentions more than a small fraction of what each subject typically experienced when he actually entered very deep hypnosis (even though the Expectations form was the first one administered, and was set up such that an entire blank page could easily be filled). Those experiences that are mentioned tend to be ones that begin to occur at shallower-than-very-deep depths. For example, the very deep experience of "loss of touch with body" was mentioned by three subjects (numbers two, three, and ten); this experience occurs gradually, beginning at lighter depths. "Feeling relaxed," which begins to occur at quite shallow depths, was expected by five subjects (numbers two, six, seven, possibly eight, and nine).

The extremely deep experience of "blankness; nothing; absolute mental quiet; etc." was mentioned by only two subjects (numbers one and two). The deepest experience from the sessions (see Figure D, part 2), "being everything; feeling oneness with everything" reported by nine of the ten subjects, was not specifically expected by any subject (subject one touches upon it). Subjects' expectations, then, give a fairly accurate but very incomplete picture of very deep hypnosis.

Estimation of Interval Duration

The results of the interval duration estimation tests are given in Figure J. At depth 20, ten overestimations of the five minute interval were made, there were six underestimations (the range of three of which touched the true figure), and two reports were exact. (Two reports

were not obtainable, due to one subject's inability to remain at depth 20 rather than come all the way out of hypnosis or sink back deep. One very deep report was not obtainable, due to a twenty-five minute break in communication between subject and experimenter. The subject reported hearing the experimenter faintly but felt he was too deep to answer: "I didn't feel as if I had any control; there was just too much effort involved [in answering]." It should be noted that two of the overestimations were radical, and that subjects reported great difficulty staying at depth 20 and preoccupation with doing so; this renders making definite conclusions difficult.

Figure J
Estimation of Interval Duration (5 minute test interval)

Subject and session	While very deep	At depth 20
1_1	10 minutes	10 minutes
1_2	5 minutes	10 minutes
2_1	Don't know	Report not obtainable
2_2	Don't know	Report not obtainable
3_1	Report not obtainable	4-5 minutes
3_2	1-2 minutes	3-4 minutes
4_1	Don't know	15 minutes
4_2	Don't know	15-20 minutes
5_1	Don't know	3 minutes
5_2	4 minutes	10 minutes
6_1	30 minutes	5 minutes
6_2	10 minutes	30 minutes
7_1	15 minutes	6 minutes
7_2	10-15 minutes	6-7 minutes

Subject and session	While very deep	At depth 20
8_1	Don't know	3-4 minutes
8_2	Don't know	8 minutes
9_1	Don't know	5 minutes
9_2	Don't know	3-5 minutes
10_1	Don't know	4-5 minutes
10_2	Don't know	7 minutes

While very deep, eleven times subjects reported not understanding the questions and/or being able to answer it, while five overestimations, two underestimations, and one accurate estimate were given. One of the overestimations was radical, as was one of the underestimations.

The form of these data makes application of Ornstein's (1969) ideas not possible. The primary finding is clearly that "time," in very deep hypnosis, is not constructed as it is ordinarily. The data do, however, make one point: the report – given by subjects on the Experience Placement forms, concerning the loss of the meaning of "time" while very deep – is substantiated.

Discussion

The experiential results presented in this dissertation are somewhat novel when examined in terms of previous hypnosis research. Reference to the introduction to this thesis shows that, for most experiences characteristic of very deep hypnosis, there exists either no previous report or a singular one (for example, "feeling oneness with everything" is mentioned only by Tart, 1970b). The reason, as discussed previously, is clear: the conjunction of rigorous very deep hypnosis research and an experiential emphasis has not been formerly realized.

The experiential results demonstrate that the subjects, with remarkable consistency, agree on what they experience when very deep in hypnosis. Experience groups such as a) "being everything; feeling oneness with everything," b) "blankness, absolute mental quiet: no thoughts images, etc.; voidness; nothing happening," and c) "loss of knowledge of your individual identity; no self or ego" are reported as characteristic of the greatest achieved hypnotic depths by nearly all (9 of 10, 10 of 10, and 9 of 10, respectively for the three groupings) of the subjects. Does there exist any reference frame, external to hypnosis research, for these extraordinary experiences?

Harman (in Fadiman, 1971), in a highly illuminating article, explains that such experiences have been reported over a great time span in fields as diverse as philosophy, religion, and music, but have not as yet been integrated into our scientific viewpoint on consciousness, perhaps because of their non-ordinary nature. Certainly, "absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc." and "being everything" are not mundane consciousness experiences. Harman (p. 139) quotes Carpenter as stating "Great have been the disputes among the learned as to the meaning of the word Nirvana – whether it indicates a state of no-consciousness or a state of vastly enhanced consciousness … The important thing is to see and admit that under cover of this and other similar terms there does exist a real and recognizable fact (that is, a state of consciousness in some sense), which has been experienced over and over again."

As Harman points out, there has been a recent attempt to understand such non-ordinary experience in terms of scientific psychology. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, a forum for that attempt, states as its purpose "The publication of theoretical and applied research … in … unitive consciousness … transcendence of the self … oneness … individual and species-wide synergy … (and) transcendental phenomena." Humanistic psychology (and "Third Force" psychology in general) has embraced as a goal the

bringing of "peak experiences," as characterized by "unitive" and "egoless" consciousness, under psychological scrutiny (see especially the chapter entitled "Cognition of being in the peak experiences" in Maslow's *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 1962). Clearly, then, at least some of the experiences reported as characteristic of very deep hypnosis are observable in other researches into the psychology of consciousness.

As yet, few such researches have actually been carried out (see Tart, 1969c, for a bibliography), although many are projected. One of the few active groups of researchers are the psychologists and psychiatrists investigating the effects of psychedelic chemicals on consciousness. Grof (1969) has recently provided an integrative review of the literature, and a beginning theoretical system for understanding it (1970). Within the enormous number of consciousness experiences discussed by Grof, repeated mention is made of experiences with a "oneness" or "union" character similar to those reported by the very deeply hypnotized subjects of this dissertation. Grof reports that such phenomena are frequently experienced at peak points during psychedelic sessions (and are considered of high importance in his theoretical formulation. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss that formulation, which is a broad and intriguing view of man; the reader is referred to the primary source).

The traditional Eastern approaches to the study of consciousness (for example, Zen Buddhism) also provide external reference to several of the very deep hypnosis experiences. Baba Ram Dass (formerly Richard Alpert, Ph.D.) – a Western psychologist who has studied in India, has recently (1971) written of the experiences of "voidness," "no self or ego," and "feeling oneness with everything" (see his book for a bibliography of available works in English concerned with traditional Eastern approaches to consciousness). When examined in (their usual) religious context, these experiences are referred to as "mystical experiences" (a discussion of mystical experience follows below).

Almost no strict Western scientific research has been done on these Eastern approaches. What little experiential research into meditation has been accomplished (Maupin, in Tart, 1969c; and Deikman, in Tart, 1969c) is suggestive: experiences such as "waves," "light body," "complete concentration," "extensive loss of body feelings," and "merging" are reported. However, since these studies employed subjects with no previous meditation experience, and since – of necessity – subjects received only minimal experience during the course of the studies, no phenomena comparable to the very deep hypnotic experiences have thus far been found.

Non-ordinary experiences of the kind reported by the very deeply hypnotized subjects are, therefore, being subjected to scrutiny in several areas of psychology. However, the work remains in its initial stage (Harman, in Fadiman, 1971, and Tart, 1969c).

Discussion of "the mystic experience" provides a richer context for understanding the extraordinary experiences of very deep hypnosis. Knowles (quoted by Deikman, who reviews and attempts to unify the literature on mystical experience, in Tart, 1969c, p. 23) describes the mystic experience and how it is produced in general terms: "…forget all the creatures that ever God made and the works of them, so that thy thought or thy desire be not directed or stretched to any of them, neither in general nor in special … At the first time when thou dost it, thou findst but a darkness and as it were a kind of unknowing, thou knowest not what, saving that thou feelest in thy will a naked intent unto God … thou mayest neither see him clearly by the light of understanding in thy reason, nor feel him in sweetness of love in thy affection…"

A correspondence can be drawn between this description and the phenomena experienced by the subjects in very deep hypnosis. The subjects did "forget all the creatures that ever God made and the works of them;" that is, they experienced *complete loss of touch with the exter-*

nal environment. They did so both "in general" and "in special;" in special, they lost touch with everything in the environment, which led to the "in general" point of *voidness*. The subjects found "a darkness," *great darkness*, and "a kind of unknowing," *absolute mental quiet*, or, as subject number five described it, *mindlessness*.

The deeply hypnotized subjects didn't report "in thy will a naked intent unto God," although several did report pure awareness (subject one, for example, reported *watching*, although nothing was present to watch). Deikman states that "trained mystics report experiences conforming more closely to the specific religious cosmology to which they are accustomed" (p. 25). The subjects, not accustomed to any religious cosmology, especially in a scientific laboratory, talked of being everything rather than of God.

The statement that "Thou mayest neither see him clearly by light of understanding in thy reason, nor feel him in sweetness of love in thy affection" also corresponds to the hypnotized subjects' experiences. At depth, they reported *absolute mental quiet: no thoughts, images, etc*. (after having reported *thoughts widely spaced* while proceeding downward), several (for example, subject two) reported inability to really communicate the very deep experience with words, and they reported *emotional experiences* and *feelings of joy* as characteristic of depths less than the most profound.

Finally, Deikman (p. 38) states that "experiencing one's self as one with the universe or with God is the hallmark of the mystic experience, regardless of its cultural context." This experience was described by the hypnotic subjects as *being everything* and *feeling oneness with everything*.

Based on his understanding of the above research, theory, and belief, the present author offers the following viewpoint on very deep hypnosis. As a subject proceeds from light into deeper hypnosis,

he progressively experiences and then "turns off" (in order to go still deeper) more and more basic conscious functions. Usually, this involves paying attention to simpler and simpler conscious phenomena. For example, while in light hypnosis, a subject might experience memories involving fairly vivid pictures, as well as sounds, tactile sensations, verbal thoughts, etc. As he progresses deeper, he experiences occasional isolated images, unconnected to verbal thoughts. The subject might also proceed from experiencing complex ideas at light levels to simply perceiving vision phenomena such as great brightness while deeper.

There are exceptions to the progression towards simpler functioning – most notably "subconscious" phenomena, which typically occur deep, and for which the complexity issue is not settled. However, the progression toward more basic functioning still applies; subconscious events can be viewed as extremely basic functions (this view of subconscious and other related phenomena is perhaps best elucidated by Carl Jung).

At the most profound depths, the subject has succeeded in turning off almost all conscious activity. The experiences he does attend to, "being everything; feeling oneness with everything," and "blankness; absolute mental quiet: no thoughts, images, etc.; voidness; nothing happening" are those that are more basic than his individual personality ("loss of knowledge of your individual identity; no self or ego"). In other words, the subject has passed beyond all those cognitive patterns that define him as a specific person and separate him from other people and his environment. What is left is undifferentiated awareness – the awareness of purely "being," through which the person is identical to everything in the universe.

Another way of stating the author's viewpoint is to assert that the subjects gradually open themselves to more universal stimulus processing messages. Since there exists less "noise," generated by their

individual personalities, they are able to "listen" in increasingly subtle ways, ending with the pure perception of existence, which underlies, and has as its overlay, every particular (differentiable) experience with which the person comes into contact. Even time is seen as a personal construct, a part of that overlay.

The electroencephalographic results can be interpreted as supporting this viewpoint. As the subjects go very deep into hypnosis, most show a decrease in EEG amplitude – that is, less brain electrical activity. At the deepest points, almost all subjects show a diminution of EEG activity to very low levels. It is possible that this phenomenon indicates that subjects have ceased all normal activity; the minimal electrical activity that remains may reflect undifferentiated awareness, or events from deeper or lower nervous system loci which have no conscious reflection.

Deikman (1969a, and unpublished manuscript) has presented a theory similar to this viewpoint. He postulates that, for reasons of adaptation to the environment in order to survive, man has, in the course of his evolution, developed an increasingly specialized consciousness. He has learned to attend to and interpret stimulus events in an increasingly more constrained, and therefore, more efficient manner. Deikman theorizes that this ordinary narrowing of focus, valuable for biological survival, is rarely broken out of; when a person does so, the experience is often called "mystical." Deikman applies the term "de-automatization" to the process of widening focus, to indicate that ordinary stimulus processing has been learned so well as to be automatic, and requires a special shift of attention to be overcome and broadened.

To quote Deikman directly (1969a, pp. 42-43), "A mystic experience is the production of an unusual state of consciousness. This state is brought about by a deautomatization of hierarchically ordered structures that ordinarily conserve attentional energy for

maximum efficiency in achieving the basic goals of the individual: biological survival as an organism and psychological survival as a personality. Perceptual selection and cognitive patterning are in the service of these goals. Under special conditions of dysfunction, such as in acute psychosis or in LSD states, or under special goal conditions such as exist in religious mystics, the pragmatic systems of automatic selection are set aside or break down, in favor of alternate modes of consciousness whose stimulus processing may be less efficient from a biological point of view but whose very inefficiency may permit the experience of aspects of the real world formerly excluded or ignored."

As can be seen in relation to the research reviewed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, the electroencephalographic results presented here are also novel. The very limited research in EEG correlates of other non-ordinary states of consciousness provides what little external reference is available for them.

Electroencephalographic studies done on Zen and Yoga practitioners generally do not yield results similar to those observed most strongly in the research described herein. As discussed earlier, the primary findings are increased predominance and other changes in the alpha activity (Kasamatsu and Hirai; and Anand, Chhina, and Singh; in Tart, 1969c). Kamiya (in Tart, 1969c), in fact, has shown that experimentally modifying the alpha rhythm by operant procedures leads to consciousness alterations that are reported as meditative in nature.

The meditation results are not necessarily inconsistent with those of this dissertation. The immediate goals of very deep hypnosis and meditation are different; indeed, as Tart (1969c, p. 486) points out, Zen and Yoga meditations differ between themselves in terms of goal, which may account for electroencephalographic differences between them. No experiential data are reported in the meditation studies, so it is not possible to determine if the meditators were expe-

riencing phenomena at all comparable to those experienced by the hypnotic subjects. It is especially worthy of note that the few Zen meditators who were particularly experienced (over 20 years) did not show EEG amplitude diminution in the profound stages of the meditation, since these subjects would be presumed to be in a state of mystical experience. A possible explanatory hypothesis is that, depending on training toward it, mystical experience is somewhat variable in nature; this hypothesis awaits experiential data on meditation for its test.

Luthe (in Tart, 1969c), in his autogenic training research, has reported that advanced trainees differ electroencephalographically from those with less experience. The latter evince "bursts of anterior theta waves … and a preserved alpha activity (p. 318)." The former (experienced) trainees, however, show "a flattening of the baseline pattern with theta oscillations … and brief paroxysmal bursts of theta activity in temporal posterior derivations (p. 318)." These findings are consistent with the EEG amplitude diminution pattern observed in very deep hypnosis, although Luthe does not report striking global amplitude diminution. Luthe's results are understandable in experiential terms; he says (p. 314) "Finally, at the deepest level … an interrogatory attitude may be assumed in expectation of answers from the unconscious." In the present research, hypnotized subjects reported "subconscious thoughts and images" fairly deep (but not maximally so), at a level where EEG amplitude diminution might be expected.

Lenox, in a recent communication to the author, reported the electroencephalogram of one subject who underwent a unitive experience while listening to music. During the time of the experience, the EEG showed marked amplitude diminution compared to the preceding and following periods.[5]

[5] J. Lenox, at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Institute, Catonsville, Maryland, 1971.

To summarize this discussion, the experiential characteristics of very deep hypnosis, as examined by this dissertation, have traditionally been regarded as highly interesting and desirable by students of mystical experience. The present experiential and electroencephalographic results appear to be consistent with what little relevant scientific research is available. The author hopes that such research will be continued and expanded. Perhaps hypnosis may soon be understood, not as an isolated consciousness phenomenon, but as a particular mode of functioning in a general theory of consciousness – a theory that is powerful enough to bring many forms of non-ordinary consciousness into general experience.

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Appendix A
Materials

[Editor's note: Spaces for answers in the original questionnaire have been deleted here.]

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Expectations

Please write down your expectations for very deep hypnosis, and where they come from:

Supplementary session report

Please write down anything important that happened that you didn't describe fully during the session:

Experience and depth scale 1

On the basis only of today's session, please write down what experiences or kinds of experiences are characteristic of what regions on the depth scale:

History of States of Consciousness

(strictly confidential)
Briefly describe your previous hypnotic experience (when were you first trained and by whom, what kinds of things do you use hypnosis for, how often are you hypnotized, etc.).

Have you ever meditated? Describe.

Have you used any drugs? Which ones, how often?

Have you ever had a spontaneous mystical experience or clearly altered state of consciousness? Please describe.

Rate your overall mental health on a 0 (very unstable) to 10 (very stable) scale. Comment if necessary.

Is there anything else about your consciousness history that you feel is important for this experiment?

Supplementary session report

Please write down anything important that happened that you didn't describe fully during the session:

Experience placement

Please indicate the region or regions where the following phenomena are experienced. If you have no experience with a particular item, leave it blank. If you want to comment on an item, do so in the space next to it.

Depth	Region
0	A
10	B
20	C
30	D
40	E
	F
	G

Experience:

- normal verbal thinking
- wavelike phenomena
- great brightness
- hearing music
- absolute mental quiet; no thoughts, images, etc.
- empathy with hypnotist
- thoughts widely spaced
- feeling of floating
- simple, basic kinds of thoughts
- emotional experiences
- thinking in images rather than words
- ideas
- partial loss of touch with external environment
- feeling oneness with everything
- feeling calm and quiet
- worries
- simple motion images
- feeling relaxed
- feeling of being in a trance

- voidness
- no “self” or “ego”
- spontaneous auditory experiences
- flashes of light or color
- loss of touch with body
- being everything
- feelings of power
- feelings of potentiality
- complete loss of touch with external environment
- dreams
- spiritual or religious experiences
- difficulty in talking
- feeling of consciousness being located in a particular part of the head
- subconscious thoughts and images
- hypersensitivity of body
- feeling totally spread out
- occasional isolated images
- profound personal or philosophical insights
- blankness

Chapter 29
Brian Feldman - A Phenomenological and Clinical Inquiry Into Deep Hypnosis

Editor: This is Brian Eliott Feldman's PhD dissertation done at the University of California, Berkeley in 1976. Dr. Feldman is now a licensed clinical psychologist and a certified child, adolescent, and adult psychoanalyst in the Jungian tradition. He speaks Spanish, French, and Portuguese as well as English and has lectured all over the world. He is a specialist in the impact of infancy and attachment problems on development throughout the life cycle.

Brian Eliott Feldman

SECTION 1
INTRODUCTION

Perspective on the Research

Scientific research on hypnosis began two centuries ago when Mesmer introduced the use of 'animal magnetism' to cure psychological and somatic dysfunctions. Mesmer believed that hypnotic

phenomena were induced through the transfer of a universal fluid that fills the universe and forms a connecting medium between the earth and the heavenly bodies, and between man and man. Mesmer termed this fluid 'animal magnetism' and believed that this substance emanated from his own hands. While Mesmer's theories were discredited by the scientific community of his time, his followers continued to utilize hypnotic states for the cure of a large variety of disorders. After Mesmer, there were many who investigated hypnotic phenomena. Researchers in the nineteenth century such as Freud, Janet and Charcot utilized hypnosis to study psychopathological states such as hysteria and conversion neuroses. In the more recent past there has been a large quantity of psychological research on hypnosis. A great deal of emphasis has been placed on what is observable in the hypnotic subject by the experimenter and the kinds of tasks which a hypnotic subject can perform while in hypnosis. This research, although useful in understanding the nature of suggestion and interpersonal influence processes, has not been able to provide a clear understanding of the different states of consciousness which comprise hypnosis.

The hypnotic state as we know it today is essentially that which came to be described in the nineteenth century heyday of hypnosis (Hilgard, 1968). Some of the phenomena which have been known to characterize the hypnotic state include a loss of initiative and lack of desire to make and carry out plans, a redistribution of attention in which selective attention and selective inattention go beyond the usual range, a heightened ability for fantasy production, a reduction in reality testing and a tolerance for persistent reality distortion, and increased suggestibility.

There has been very little research directed toward describing the state of hypnosis that exists when no direct suggestions are given to the subject to experience anything at all. This is an important area of research since the phenomenology of hypnosis has received little

attention from hypnosis researchers. In the recent past, there have been three studies (Erickson, 1965; Tart, 1969; and Sherman, 1971) which have been directed towards exploring and mapping out the different states of awareness which occur during hypnosis when no suggestions are given. These researchers have found that when subjects enter into suggestion-free hypnosis, they experience similar types of phenomena which include a loss of awareness of the body, feelings of oneness with surrounding environment and feelings of floating in an infinite expanse. These findings point to a logical ordering of experienced phenomena in suggestion-free hypnosis. The hypnotic technique which has evolved to study these alterations in consciousness has come to be known as 'deep hypnosis.' Deep hypnosis involves the subject being told that he will be given no suggestions to experience anything at all during hypnosis, and that while hypnotized he is to try to let go of any expectations that he may have about hypnosis and simply let whatever happens happen. Utilizing this technique, it has been possible to study the pure phenomenology of the hypnotic state which has been uninfluenced by suggestions. This is an important area for research because our present-day conceptions of hypnosis are still largely influenced by psychological concepts which, as Hilgard has noted, have their origin in the nineteenth century. Folklore and anecdote have also played a major role in our understanding of hypnosis; and it is important to determine what are the essential parameters of the hypnotic experience and what experiences are the results solely of hypnosis and not of suggestion. Deep hypnosis offers a means for studying the phenomenology of the hypnotic experience uninfluenced by suggestion, as well as providing a way of mapping out the state or states of consciousness which are produced by hypnosis.

Theoretical Background

Since the nineteenth century, many different theories of hypnosis have emerged. Most of these theories have attempted to explore

both the interpersonal and intrapsychic processes which occur when a person is hypnotized. A review of the most important of these theories will provide a background for the understanding of the phenomenology of hypnosis. In particular, it will show what each of these theories has or does not have to offer research in deep hypnosis.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalysis emerged out of Freud's early work with hypnosis. Hypnosis was used to help the patient contact repressed traumatic memories which were believed to be the cause of neurotic symptoms. Freud believed that symptom formation had its origin in a series of impressions which could be grasped only in a profound state of trance. Other psychoanalysts (Ferenczi, 1909; Brenman, Gill and Knight, 1952) maintain that the established hypnotic state is a special form of a transference relationship in which there is an emphasis on the gratification of infantile passive wishes. Ferenczi (1909) has gone so far as to say that the capacity to be hypnotized and influenced by suggestions depends on the possibility of transference taking place. Hypnosis, according to this viewpoint, is a return to childhood where the hypnotist becomes a father figure for the hypnotized subject and arouses in him the same feelings of love and fear, and the same conviction of infallibility as those which his parents inspired in him as a child.

More contemporary psychoanalysts such as Kubie and Margolin (1944) and Gill and Brenman (1959) view hypnosis as a regression which can approach the sensori-motor state of the infant in his first few weeks of life. The boundaries between the ego and the outer world are de-differentiated and the incoming stimuli are perceived as being indistinguishable from the self. The hypnotist's voice is often experienced as an extension of the subject's own psychic processes. Kubie and Margolin (1944) state that this dissolution of

ego boundaries creates a psychological state which is analogous to that brief period in early infancy in which the mother's breast in the mouth of the infant is part of the infant's ego. Gill and Brenman (1959) see the hypnotic situation as a regressive transference based on a relationship with the hypnotist as a parent substitute. The induction initiates a regression leading to this special type of state which is characterized by the domination of impulse and an archaic transference relationship. Kris (1952) has noted that the regression which occurs in hypnosis need not always be pathological. The regression can be in the service of the ego when there is adequate ego strength. He describes this regression as a reversion to primary process thinking and the adoption of more archaic modes of defense in the service of greater adaptation.

Although psychoanalytic theory offers a cogent explanation of the psychodynamic processes which facilitate the recovery of previously repressed and forgotten memories, it does not offer an understanding of the subjective phenomenology of the hypnotic state. Psychoanalytic researchers focus their speculations exclusively on regressive ego functioning and transference relationships and do not describe the actual experiences of the hypnotic subject while hypnotized. This research will attempt to fill in the experiential gap which has been left vacant in psychoanalytic theorizing about the hypnotic state.

Shor's Altered State Theory of Hypnosis

The model of hypnotic behavior which Shor (1959) has devised is similar in many respects to Kris' notion of regression in the service of the ego. Shor notes that in hypnosis a new reality orientation is gained and that the normal ego organization of the awake state undergoes a radical alteration. The usual state of ego consciousness is characterized by the mobilization of a structured

frame of reference which supports, interprets and gives meaning to all experiences. This frame of reference Shor calls the generalized reality orientation. The generalized reality orientation is the equivalent to the cognitive components of the ego and what the psychoanalysts refer to as secondary process thinking. Any state in which the generalized reality orientation has faded to relatively nonfunctional awareness may be termed a trance state. The hypnotic state involves a diminishing of the generalized reality orientation. When the generalized reality orientation fades, various mental contents which have been excluded before can flow more freely into phenomenal awareness. According to Shor, once a deep trance is achieved, hypnosis need not involve the playing of any role other than the pursuing of one's own inner dynamics. The hypnotist may act as a collaborator to help achieve a state of mind which transcends the playing of an extremely defined role, freeing the individual for hypnotic experiences which are similar to states of profound fascination, peak experiences, or mystic states of inner contemplation.

The present research is an attempt to provide quantitative and experiential data to clarify the subjective dimensions of the hypnotic state which Shor refers to as 'being' hypnosis, and which involves the pursuit of one's own inner dynamics. 'Being' hypnosis is very similar to deep hypnosis in that the hypnotist does not offer suggestions, but rather induces the subject into hypnosis and then allows him to experience anything that arises within him spontaneously. Shor has not defined the experiential parameters of 'being' hypnosis. He has only suggested that this type of hypnosis is valuable and important to research. The present research is an attempt to map out those parameters which occur when a hypnotic subject is not told to experience anything while in hypnosis, but merely to let himself become aware of his own intrapsychic processes.

The Role-playing Theory of Hypnosis

Role-playing theorists attempt to demonstrate that hypnosis is one form of a more general kind of social psychological behavior which involves the playing of a role. Role-playing theorists such as White (1941) and Sarbin (1967) view hypnotic behavior as motivated by the subject's desire to behave like a hypnotized person. According to role-playing theory, hypnosis occurs only if the subject knows what is expected of him, and then voluntarily conforms to the demands of the hypnotist. Hypnosis is thus the product of the expectations of the subject and his conformity to a role. The altered state of hypnosis, according to White and Sarbin, is a simple derivation of profound organismic involvement in a role. Sarbin views even the deepest hypnotic phenomena as a kind of 'as if' behavior, which is not sham, but involves such a submergence of the self in the role that the subject can perceive the situation in no other way.

Orne (1959) maintains that hypnotic behavior results from the subject's conception of the role of a hypnotic subject as determined by past experience and learning, and by the implicit and explicit cues provided ty the hypnotist and the situation. Any increase in suggestibility is viewed as an increase in motivation to conform to the wishes of the hypnotist. The role-taking model theorizes that one's experience is a result of a motivation to conform to one's expectations. In his study an attempt was made to determine what a subject's expectation are about being in suggestion-free deep hypnosis and then these expectations were compared with the experiences subjects had while being hypnotized. From preliminary work done by this investigator (Feldman, 1973), few hypnotic subjects were able to describe or predict the phenomena they experienced in deep hypnosis. The present research was directed at studying the interaction of expectations and actual hypnotic experience to see if the role-playing model is applicable to the deep hypnosis situation.

Barber's Skeptical Approach

Barber (1964) states that the criteria for denoting the subjective state of hypnosis, or the "altered state of consciousness" of hypnosis has not been specified. Barber (1969) maintains that a special hypnotic induction is not necessary to produce hypnotic behavior such as arm levitation, visual and auditory hallucinations, and body immobility. It is not the hypnotic induction per se which causes the unusual behavior to occur, Barber claims, but rather a host of antecedent variables such as the subject's expectation of his own performance, his attitudes toward the test situation, his motivation to cooperate, the tone and the wording of the questions, and the tone and wording of the suggestions. Barber (1969) sees no need to postulate a special state of consciousness to account for the behavior which has traditionally been associated with hypnotism. Rather, 'hypnotic' behavior is due to variables which are found in a wide variety of interpersonal test situations. Through his rigorous experimental research, Barber has asserted that it is unnecessary to postulate a hypnotic state of consciousness to explain responses to suggestions of muscular rigidities, analgesia, age regression, hallucinations, and amnesia. Rather, it is important to define the manner in which the situation is defined to the subject.

Barber's research has shown that subjects who have not been given an induction, but who are motivated to perform a particular task, can perform hypnotic tasks as well as subjects who are given a hypnotic induction. Barber's approach focuses on the interpersonal and motivational variables which are involved in the performance of hypnotic tasks in untrained hypnotic subjects. He has never researched the actual experiences of subjects in hypnosis after they have been trained to experience hypnotic behavior. This methodological difference between Barber's research and the current research which utilized trained subjects is very important. The current research is an attempt to delineate the experiences in deep hypnosis of trained subjects.

Ernest and Josephine Hilgard's Developmental-Interactive Theory of Hypnosis

E. Hilgard's (1968) research in hypnosis has been concerned mainly with individual differences in hypnotic susceptibility. In order to explain these differences, Hilgard has devised a developmental-interactive theory of hypnosis. The theory consists firstly of developmental propositions which are concerned with explaining the lifelong experiences that produce the kind of person who is able to enter into a hypnotic state. The second set of propositions are interactive, and are concerned with what happens within the induction of hypnosis, between the hypnotist and the subject, which causes the establishment of a hypnotic state. Hilgard maintains that all children are capable of entering into hypnosis and that it is an ability which many people lose later in life. The induction of hypnosis, according to Hilgard, has to do with the situation created by the hypnotist and the transference relationship between subject and hypnotist where the subject delegates parental authority and power to the hypnotist to induce in the subject "child" an altered state. This view is very similar to the one held by psychoanalysis.

J. Hilgard's work in hypnosis and personality builds on her husband's research. J. Hilgard (1970) has been concerned with correlating different personality traits with susceptibility to hypnosis. She has found that some aspects of childhood background and present personality structure are highly correlated with measures of hypnotic susceptibility. Those aspects of personality which she found most important are: imaginative involvements, severity of punishment in childhood, temperamental similarity to the parent of the opposite sex, and a normal and outgoing personality which included ease of communication in an interview, a ready motivation for hypnosis, and a global rating of normality. She notes that the association between the capacity for intense involvement in some activity and hypnotic susceptibility is based on an intense involvement with activities and

things rather than with people. This ability for intense involvement points to a capacity for the surrender of the self to something on the outside and a merging with that something; in other words, an ability to yield something of one's autonomy. J. Hilgard also found that the severity of punishment in childhood was related to susceptibility to hypnosis when the strictness of discipline in the home was orderly and perceived as just. In this situation, the compliance became relatively automatic and conflict-free. When this type of subject, who has in the past voluntarily assented to the subordinate role, enters into hypnosis, his old habits take over and he automatically accepts what the hypnotist tells him.

The Hilgards' research has been concerned with the psycho-dynamic-developmental issues involved in hypnotic susceptibility. They have not approached the relationship between personality characteristics and experience within the hypnotic state. This current research attempts to look at personality dimensions and their relationship to the actual phenomena which are experienced by a hypnotic subject in deep hypnosis.

Research Background

There has been a great quantity of hypnosis research of a behavioral nature. The major focus of this research has been on the overt responses of hypnotized subjects to suggestions of enhanced physical or mental abilities. Researchers such as Weitzenhoffer (1963), Hilgard (1968), and Barber (1969) have conducted research on the ability to endure pain while hypnotized, to experience positive and negative hallucinations while hypnotized, and to experience distortions of time. This literature will not be reviewed because it is not directly relevant to the present research which is directed towards the phenomenology of the hypnotic state. Much of the hypnosis research to date has not been successful in identifying the essence of the phenomena of hypnosis. There has been little research which has

explicitly dealt with the state or states of hypnosis that exist when no suggestions have been made. The present research is an attempt to map out the structure of the different experiences which occur in hypnosis.

The Phenomenology of Hypnosis

There has been some research describing what happens to subjects experientially during hypnosis. Gill and Brenman (1959) have noted spontaneous changes in body experience reported by their hypnotic subjects while they were entering into hypnosis. Subjects reported experiencing changes in the size of their bodies in the complete absence of any hypnotic instructions. The most common changes reported were the swelling of the head, mouth, and arms, and the experienced loss of the body and its parts. Gill and Brenman (1959) speculate that these experienced changes in the body image are related to the 'regressive' nature of the hypnotic process. They also report that subjects entering into the hypnotic state experience a change in their sense of equilibrium. Subjects reported feeling either giddy or dizzy, and at times felt as if they were floating in space. When their eyes were open while in hypnosis they perceived reality as being covered by a veil. Objects in their visual field appeared shadowy and dreamlike.

E. Hilgard (1968) has noted that subjects who have been hypnotized for the first time report experiencing some of the following phenomena: loss of ties to reality, changes in body image, feelings of floating, blacking out, dizziness and spinning.

There have been few research studies which have been directed exclusively at the phenomenology of deep hypnosis, i.e., suggestion-free hypnosis. The first study was reported by Erickson (1965). Erickson conducted a unique study using the deep hypnosis technique in which Aldous Huxley was the sole subject. When Huxley

first went into hypnosis, he described a state of simple withdrawal of interest from the outside world into the inner world. Inner subjective sensations became intensified as outer reality became more obscure. Later, Huxley experienced "a most pleasing sense of comfort and a dim faulty awareness that there was an external reality" (Erickson, 1965, p. 284). After this Huxley became completely disoriented for time and space. He was able to open his eyes but described his field of vision as being a well of light. Later, he lost the sensation in the lower part of his body and developed a profound anesthesia. Towards the end of the session Huxley described himself as being in a timeless, spaceless void. Huxley described his experience with deep hypnosis as "a total absence of everything on the way there and on the way back, and an expected meaningless something for which one awaits in a state of Nirvana since there is nothing more to do" (Erickson, 1965, p. 280). While in deep hypnosis Huxley also experienced a sense of merging with colors and a sense of losing his personal identity. Huxley describes the deep hypnotic state as follows:

Aside from my 'reality,' there existed the type of reality that one encounters in vivid dreams, a reality that one does not question. Instead, one accepts such reality completely without intellectual questioning and there are no conflicting contrasts nor judgmental comparisons nor contradictions so that whatever is subjectively experienced is unquestioningly accepted as both subjectively and objectively genuine and in keeping with all else (Erickson, 1965, p. 295).

Tart (1969) has conducted some original research on the experiential reports of a single hypnotic subject utilizing the deep hypnosis technique. As Tart's subject went into deep hypnosis, he described the following experiences: (a) his body became extremely relaxed and later awareness of the body was lost; (b) absolute blackness was perceived, his sense of identity and ego-awareness was lost, and a sense of identity experienced as a potential emerged; (c) time slowed down,

then ceased to become a meaningful concept; (d) a feeling of oneness with the universe emerged; (e) awareness of breathing changed and was then lost; and (f) spontaneous mental activity stopped.

Sherman (1971) found that experiences reported in deep hypnosis were consistent across several subjects. Experiences reported in deep hypnosis included: being everything, feeling oneness with everything, loss of knowledge of individual identity, no 'self' or 'ego,' blankness, absolute mental quiet, no thoughts or images, voidness, and nothing happening. Sherman concluded from his study that it is possible for at least some hypnotic subjects to go deeper into hypnosis than had been previously explored, and that there is a commonality to the experiences reported in deep hypnosis. Many of these experiences show a correspondence to what is usually labeled 'mystical' or 'unitive' experience.

Personality Assessment and Hypnosis

Most research on the relationship between personality traits and hypnosis has been focused on the correlation of different personality characteristics with hypnotic susceptibility. Hilgard (1968) has noted that studies which have attempted to relate personality traits as measured by personality inventories with hypnotic susceptibility have been, for the most part, unsuccessful. Since this study is not concerned with the relationship between hypnotic susceptibility and personality traits those unsuccessful studies will not be reviewed.

There have been a few studies which have explored the relationship between personality traits and hypnotic experience. One such study was carried out by Fromm, Oberlander and Gruenewald (1970). Utilizing the Rorschach these researchers found that hypnosis does make primary process material more accessible to consciousness, but that the effects of this accessibility are a function of individual structural and dynamic characteristics. The regression induced by hypnosis

tends to be in the service of the ego for the well-integrated person. In the poorly integrated individual, hypnosis tends to elicit a pathological or near pathological regression. Two other Rorschach studies have compared thought organization between the waking state and under hypnosis. West, Baugh and Baugh (1963) found that subjects gave more oral-passive responses while in hypnosis, used more primitive reasoning, showed less rigidity and a decrease in defenses. In another study, Ackman (1960) found an increase in blatant, extreme manifestations of primary process thought in Rorschach protocols obtained under hypnosis. There have been no studies which have been directed towards correlating personality characteristics with experiences in suggestion-free deep hypnosis. The present study was an attempt to determine if different personality traits such as ego-strength, openness to experience, Rorschach Movement, Rorschach Form-level, and the personality types of the Jungian typology are related to experiences in deep hypnosis.

Current Research

This research is an attempt to answer two very important questions: what do people experience while in hypnosis when they are given no instructions to experience anything at all, and how do different personality characteristics influence what one experiences while in a hypnotic state? To date, there have been few quantitative or systematic research studies which have explored the subjective aspects of hypnosis to determine what actually constitutes the hypnotic state in contrast to the manifestations within it which are a result of suggestion. This study is an attempt to fill in an experiential gap in hypnosis research; i.e., what actually constitutes the essence of the hypnotic state which is not influenced by suggestion. Another aspect of this research is the interface between personality variables and experience while in hypnosis. There have been few studies to date which have researched the effects of personality variables upon one's experience in a hypnotic state, and

there have been no studies which have related personality characteristics to experience in suggestion-free deep hypnosis.

Hypotheses of the Current Research

It was hypothesized in this study that subjects would experience measurable changes in their state of consciousness when they entered into deep hypnosis. Subjects were expected to experience in deep hypnosis, as compared to the awake state, marked alterations in their concentration, attention, memory, judgment, time sense, body image, affect, and somatic functioning. It was also hypothesized that subjects would experience similar phenomena in deep hypnosis as has been reported by Erickson (1965), Tart (1969), and Sherman (1971). These experiences included alterations in the body image, loss of knowledge of individual identity, and absolute mental quiet. The testing of this hypothesis provided important data to determine if these previous studies could be replicated.

It was also hypothesized in this study that ego strength as measured by Rorschach F+% and the Barron Ego-Strength Scale was needed to be able to enter into deep hypnosis and to experience a wide variety and large quantity of altered state phenomena as measured by the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. It was thought that subjects who were high on measures of ego-strength should be able to relinquish ego controls and enter into deep hypnosis without experiencing anxiety which would necessitate the use of constricting ego defenses. Subjects high on measures of ego-strength should not feel overwhelmed by the deep hypnosis situation because they would be able to experience deep hypnosis as a regression in the service of the ego. This hypothesis is supported by Fromm, et al.'s (1970) research which showed that in well integrated (high ego-strength) individuals hypnosis was experienced as a non-pathological regression. It was also hypothesized that subjects who were low in ego-strength should have a greater

difficulty in relinquishing ego controls, should be quickly overwhelmed by the deep hypnosis experience, and should attempt to modulate their experience by either coming out of hypnosis soon after induction or by utilizing constricting defenses to contain the experience. The use of these mechanisms should predispose them to experience less altered state phenomena.

Another hypothesis of the present study was that measures of contact with one's inner life in an awake state as measured by the Openness to Experience Inventory, Rorschach Movement, Jungian Introversion, Intuition, and Perception would influence the amount of altered state phenomena experienced in deep hypnosis. This hypothesis was based on the belief that personality traits in an awake state would influence experience in a hypnotic state. It was thought that subjects who were more in contact with intrapsychic processes in an awake state should also be more in contact with intrapsychic processes in the hypnotic state. The degree of contact with intrapsychic processes in the hypnotic state was measured by the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. By testing this hypothesis empirically, it was possible to test whether hypnotic experience is state-related or personality-related.

Measures

Linton-Langs subjective experience questionnaire.

The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire (Linton and Langs, 1962) was developed to measure the nature of subjective experience produced under the influence of LSD-25. The questionnaire is composed of seventy-three items grouped on an a priori basis into the following seven scales:

1. Alteration in thinking (13 items) - pertaining to disturbance in concentration, attention, memory, and judgment.
2. Disturbed time sense (4 items).

3. Loss of control (16 items) - concerning fears of losing one's grip on reality, the inability to control emotions, and loss of self-control.
4. Meaning change (16 items) - feeling of increased ability, understanding, and judgment.
5. Affect change (15 items) - pertaining to mood changes.
6. Body image change (10 items).
7. Somatic change (11 items) - referring to somatic symtomatology such as dizziness, numbness, nausea and weakness.

The questionnaire was used in this research since many of the experiences reported by subjects while in deep hypnosis in studies by Tart (1969) and Sherman (1971) are similar to the categories of the questionnaire. It was hypothesized in this study that deep hypnosis would cause changes in all of the Linton-Langs scales.

Ludwig and Levine (1965) conducted a study in which the Linton-Langs Questionnaire was employed to gauge subjective reactions to hypnosis. In a sample of post-drug-addict hospital patients it was found that a large number of items differentiated the hypnotic from the baseline waking condition. Subjects in hypnosis reported experiencing a sense of unreality, differences in external perception, a feeling of melting or merging into their surroundings, loss of control over themselves, a feeling of being controlled by others, a greater difficulty in moving, a fascination with certain thoughts or external stimuli, an increased sense of happiness, power, and feeling like a different person. In contrast, subjects in the waking baseline condition more frequently claimed to feel depressed, angry, talk more about themselves, think about things they usually do not think about, and have their thoughts move faster than usual. Some of these results (such as feeling depressed and angry) could stem from the hospital population of post-drug addicts used in the study. The present study provides a replication of the Ludwig and Levine study with a more normal subject population.

Hypnotic depth

A measure of hypnotic depth was used in this research and it was based on the subject's verbal estimation of his depth of hypnosis. Tart (1970) has done an extensive review of different approaches to hypnotic depth, and has concluded that depth itself is a highly meaningful concept. He notes that "work with hypnosis indicates that subjects' reports of the depth of the state of consciousness are excellent predictors of other effects potentially available at that depth and form lawful continua when mapped for individual subjects" (Tart 1969, p. 40). Tart has found that self-reports of hypnotic depth are highly correlated with measures of hypnotic behavior and experience. In a study by Tart (1970), subjects were asked to scale their depth of hypnosis on a 10-point scale after each suggestibility item on the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale. Tart found that there was a significant level of agreement reported by the subjects between a particular hypnotic behavior and the depth at which it was experienced on the depth scale. He also found that when self-report measures of depth were given without the subject consciously thinking about them, there was a higher correlation between subjects than when reports were made after thinking about the depth of the response.

Some other hypnosis researchers have also been concerned with the concept of depth. LeCron (1953) was able to measure hypnotic depth simply by instructing his subjects that they would be able to scale their hypnotic depth on a 100-point scale. LeCron told his subjects that their 'subconscious minds' always knew how deeply hypnotized they were, and that whenever he asked them what their depth was, a number would flash into consciousness from their subconscious minds and they would report it immediately. These self-reports of hypnotic depth correlated extremely well with clinical estimates of the subject's depth and could, for most purposes, replace other measures of depth such as particular hypnotic phenomena.

The present research used the depth scale which is described below:

1-25	**Feel slightly different than normal**
26-50	**Light hypnosis**
51-75	**Moderate hypnosis**
76-100	**Deep hypnosis**

Subjects were told that the tasks which were the most difficult to perform during the hypnosis training sessions would correspond to the 51 to 75 range on the hypnotic depth scale. Subjects were also told before the hypnotic induction of the second session that they would be allowed to go deeper into hypnosis than 100. A depth scale was used in this study in order to give the subjects a measure of their hypnotic state while conveying no implicit suggestions about what was "supposed" to be experienced. Subjects in this study were familiar with the use of depth scales which were introduced during the hypnosis training sessions.

Rorschach test

The Rorschach test makes it possible to explore in depth each subject's inner life, the extent and nature of his fantasies, and the manner in which impulses and emotions are handled. It is also possible to look at the adequacy and formal properties of intellectual functioning and the characteristic defenses and controls used by the testee. In particular, the Rorschach provides a picture of the effectiveness of ego functioning and reality testing and also gives important information on the use of inner fantasy material. Form level and movement scores on the Rorschach were obtained from each of the subjects in this study to gauge ego-strength and extent of contact with fantasy material in a waking state. As has already

been hypothesized, it was thought that subjects scoring high on the dimension of ego-strength would be able to go into deep hypnosis without experiencing great quantities of anxiety which would call forth the use of repressive defense mechanisms and necessitate the termination of the deep hypnosis session. Subjects who gave many movement responses on the Rorschach, indicating contact with intrapsychic processes, were expected to experience a large quantity of altered state experiences as measured by the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire while in deep hypnosis.

The score of F+% on the Rorschach describes the accuracy with which form qualities are utilized. The philosophy behind the form level score in the Rorschach is derived from the belief that mature ego functioning involves a capacity for undistorted perception. Korchin (1960) noted that a high percentage of F+ (good form) responses depends upon an ability to concentrate, the availability of clear memory images, the ability to bring memory images into consciousness, and the ability to select from among these memory images the most fitting one for the stimulus. The production of good form responses is dependent upon the ability to organize, integrate, and control the perceptual and associational processes. Good form responses on the Rorschach require a minimum distortion by unconscious emotional factors and indicate the individual's capacity to delay the discharge of impulse and thus allow the formation of a reality appropriate response.

The movement response was used as a measure of the ability to utilize imagination in a waking state. It was hypothesized that subjects who were able to utilize inner fantasy material in an awake state would be more apt to experience a wide range of altered state phenomena in deep hypnosis than those subjects who were unable to utilize such material in an awake state. Rorschach (1949) has stated that the movement response corresponds to one's capacity for inner creation. People with many movement responses are, according to

Rorschach, imaginative individuals who enjoy losing themselves in their inner lives. Rorschach (1949) noted that the number of movement (M) responses increases in proportion to intelligence and that M itself represents the freedom of the associative process. Rorschach's M is determined by form perceptions plus kinesthetic factors, and the percept is interpreted to be in motion. Rorschach stated that answers can be interpreted as being kinesthetically determined only when human beings or animals capable of motion similar to that of human beings are seen in the figures. Rapaport (1946) maintained that in a normal population, the greater the number of M responses the higher the level of endowment involving flexibility, versatility, and wealth of both associative process and perceptual organizing abilities. Beck (1961) stated that the M response is a communication out of the subject's unconscious which reveals the wishes and fears which are active on a fantasy level and which are not lived out in the real world.

Schachtel (1966) noted that the capacity for inner creation represented by movement responses is identical in its highest development with artistic inspiration, creativity, and religious experience. The movement response for Schachtel is a creative act since the subject must imbue his percept with movement. He brings something to the blot which was not there before; in effect, he breathes life into the blot. Stark (1968) stated that the sense of the sublime is related to Rorschach's notion of inner creation and the movement response, and that the M response is a measure of the capacity for Freud's primary process thinking. The M response can thus provide an indication of an individual's capacity for regression in the service of the ego. High M subjects are more apt to accept a kind of knowing and knowledge that is neither sensory, calculative, verbal, or quantitative (Stark, 1968).

In a study determining the personality correlates of the high movement person, Barron (1955) found that those people who had a

greater readiness to perceive movement were more intelligent and more inventive than those unable to do so. His findings are very close to Rorschach's original hypothesis about the high M type personality. Rorschach (1949) noted that the high M type has develop a facility for doing inner work and is capable of introversion (though not necessarily introverted in the Jungian sense of the term). He has more individualized intelligence, greater creative ability, more inner life, more stable affective relations, and is less adaptable to reality.

A review of the Rorschach movement literature points to the hypothesis that high M subjects should be able to go very deeply into hypnosis as well as have experiences which are discontinuous from their normal state of ego awareness without becoming highly anxious and calling upon repressive defense mechanisms. High M subjects hypothetically should be able to give up without undue anxiety their generalized reality orientation and be able to involve themselves in the hypnotic process. Their ego functioning would be flexible enough to allow for a regression in the service of the ego without the decompensation of adaptive ego mechanisms,

Self-report personality tests

In addition to the Rorschach, a battery of personality tests was administered including the Gough Adjective Check List, the Barron Ego-Strength Scale (from the MMPI), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory. The results of the Myers-Briggs Inventory, the Barron Ego-Strength Scale, and the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory were correlated with subjective experience in suggestion-free deep hypnosis as measured by the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire.

The Gough Adjective Check List (Gough, 1965) was used in this study to gain a picture of personality functioning in the subjects on

a wide range of normal personality dimensions. Gough has noted that the particular value of the check list approach is that it can offer words and ideas commonly used for description in everyday life in a format which is systematic and standardized. The Gough Adjective Check List consists of 24 scales which measure a broad range of normal personality functioning. Means for each of the 24 scales were obtained and a description of the hypnotic subjects was derived from the test profiles. It was very important to obtain a general picture of global personality functioning to determine the generalizability of subjective phenomena experienced in hypnosis. It was also important to obtain a gauge of the normality of the subject population since the technique used in this study has not been tried on clinical populations.

The Barron Ego-Strength Scale (Barron, 1953) was used in this study to gain another measure (along with Rorschach form level) of ego-strength in the hypnotic subjects. This measure of ego-strength was then compared to performance in deep hypnosis. The Barron Ego-Strength Scale of the MMPI was originally designed to predict the response of psycho-neurotic patients to psychotherapy. Barron noted that it is a useful assessment device "in any situation where some estimate of adaptability and personal resourcefulness is wanted, since it appears to measure the various aspects of effective personal functioning which are usually subsumed under the term ego-strength" (1953, p. 327). Barron stated that the characteristics which are referred to as ego-strength include physiological stability and good health, a strong sense of reality, feelings of personal adequacy and vitality, permissive morality, emotional outgoingness, spontaneity and intelligence.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers, 1962) is a personality inventory based on Jung's theory of personality types. The scales on this test provide measures of introversion, extraversion, and the use of feeling, thinking, intuition and sensation in perception. The indicator aims to ascertain people's basic preferences in regard to per-

ception and judgment. Myers (1962) stated that 'perception' includes the process of becoming aware of things, people, occurrences or ideas. 'Judgment' refers to the processes of coming to conclusions about what has been perceived. The indicator contains separate indices for determining each of the following four basic preferences: extraversion or introversion, sensation or intuition, thinking or feeling, and judgment or perception.

The extraversion-introversion index reflects whether a person is extraverted or introverted in the Jungian sense. According to Jung (1923), the extravert is oriented to the outer world, and focuses his perception and judgment upon people and things. The introvert is oriented primarily to the inner world and focuses his perception and judgment upon concepts and ideas. The sensation-intuition index reflects a person's preference between two opposite ways of perceiving. The sensation type is made aware directly of things through the five senses. Intuition is interpreted by Jung as an indirect perception by way of the unconscious. Intuition is an imaginative operation, reaching out by means of visions to the universe of possibility. The thinking-feeling index is designed to reflect a person's preference between two opposite ways of judging: thinking, which involves the impersonal discrimination between true and false; and feeling, which discriminates between valued and non-valued. For the thinking type the realm of ideas are the primary personal reality. For the feeling type emotions are the primary reality and life is lived subjectively and personally. The last scale, the judgment-perception index, is designed to reflect whether a person relies primarily upon a judging process (thinking or feeling) or upon a perceptive process (sensation or intuition) in his dealing with the outer world.

The Myers-Briggs Indicator was used in this study to determine if such dimensions as intuition and introversion, which indicate an ability to be in contact with inner fantasy material in an awake state, would influence the experiences the subjects had while in deep hyp-

nosis. It was thought that introverted and intuitive types would be able to have a wide range of altered state experiences while in deep hypnosis. Thinking types who utilize mainly rational intellectual functioning in their dealings with the outer world and extraverted types who are focused on the external as opposed to the internal fantasy world were expected to experience less altered state phenomena while in hypnosis. No definite hypotheses were made concerning the other Myers-Briggs dimensions, but it was believed that they should be included considering the exploratory nature of this study.

Fitzgerald's (1966) Openness to Experience Inventory provides a measure of 'adaptive regression,' and the ability to oscillate from unregulated thinking to regulated thinking. It is also a measure of degree of contact with inner fantasy and along with Rorschach movement and Jungian measures of introversion and intuition was hypothesized to be related to experience in deep hypnosis. It was thought that an ability for adaptive regression which is measured by the Openness to Experience Inventory would influence experience in deep hypnosis. High scorers on this test were hypothesized to experience a large quantity of altered state phenomena in deep hypnosis without being overwhelmed by anxiety and thus needing to terminate the experience. Openness to experience is defined as the ability to loosen fixed anticipations and sets so that one can approach the objects of one's experience in different ways and from different angles. The person who is truly open to experience has the ability to shift from more to less regulated thinking, and is able to experience unusual phenomena without pathological repression. The Openness to Experience Inventory has as its theoretical foundation the psychoanalytic concept of regression in the service of the ego which has been explicated by Kris (1952). Kris delineated two distinct phases in the process of regression in the service of the ego. The first, the inspirational phase, is characterized by the surging into awareness of unconscious and preconscious contents. The second, the elaborational phase, involves the reorganization into secondary process language of unconscious and preconscious pri-

mary process contents. The process of regression in the service of the ego involves an oscillation from an unregulated type of thinking to a regulated type of thinking, and from a primitive type of content to a more socialized and communicable type of content. The regression in the service of the ego process is adaptive if the primary process is ego-syntonic and large amounts of anxiety are not produced, thus calling forth repressive defense mechanisms. Sufficient ego-strength is needed for the regression to be adaptive. The concept of openness to experience is also described by Schachtel (1966). For Schachtel, openness to experience involves a loosening of fixed sets and expectations so that one is able to approach one's experience in different ways. This process is facilitated by not being bound by rigorous rules or by conventional modes of perception and thought.

SECTION II
METHOD

Subjects

The ten subjects used in this study (five male, five female) were randomly chosen from a pool of hypnotic subjects trained by the experimenter and his colleagues under the supervision of Dr. Christina Maslach. All of the subjects were undergraduate students at the University of California at Berkeley. They originally found out about hypnosis research through a demonstration of hypnotic techniques by Dr. Maslach which was carried out in their introductory psychology course. At the end of the class demonstration Dr. Maslach announced that subjects would be needed for research in hypnosis, and that any interested persons could take part in a group administration of the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility to be given at a specified time and place. All potential hypnotic subjects were chosen from those who scored in the highest ranges on the scale (between seven and ten) and who expressed an interest in participating in the research and training. Before partic-

ipation in the hypnosis training was approved, potential subjects were administered the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, and then were given a questionnaire regarding their expectations about hypnosis, their experiences with altered states (through drugs, meditation, or religious experiences) and whether they had been in psychotherapy. Any subjects who appeared to exhibit emotional instability as indicated by the MMPI and the questionnaire were not allowed to participate in the hypnosis training. The group of subjects that finally participated in the hypnosis training were all in a state of good mental health and did not exhibit any psychological abnormalities as measured by the MMPI. All hypnotic subjects were also intelligent and articulate enough to give introspective reports which would make possible a phenomenological analysis of alterations in their state of consciousness.

Hypnosis Training

Before participating in the research, hypnotic subjects were requested to take part in hypnosis training consisting of eight two-hour sessions. Five trainers conducted the hypnosis training. All had previously been trained by Dr. Maslach, and all had a clinical background deemed sufficient by the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects for conducting the training. Before beginning the training, all subjects signed consent forms. In addition, subjects signed another consent form before taking part in the present research. Subjects were trained in groups of five. A total of 25 subjects were trained, of which ten were used for this research.

The goal of the training was to teach the subjects self-hypnosis. Subjects were instructed from the first session on how to hypnotize themselves. Suggestions were built into each session that the subjects would be able to hypnotize themselves with increasing ease and speed in the future. During the training the hypnotists

acted as facilitators, giving suggestions on how to achieve a certain state. The trainers stressed at all times that the subjects were free to try the suggestions if they wanted to do so. The subjects were told that they could remain in the hypnotic state for as long or short a time as they chose. Subjects were never challenged or forced to do anything they did not want to do. After each session was completed, the subjects filled out a brief questionnaire regarding how well the various suggestions had worked, as well as their feelings toward the trainer and the training in general.

The following are some of the suggestions and techniques which were used in the training: age-regression, time distortion, hypnotic dreaming, floating, guided imagery, arm levitation and rigidity, and analgesia. The training sessions were conducted in a permissive, non-authoritarian atmosphere. Subjects were encouraged to talk about their experiences in a group setting and the trainers were careful to note any adverse reactions during hypnosis in any of the subjects.

Set and setting

The experimenter tried to provide as comfortable an atmosphere as possible for the experiment. A room on the fifth floor of Tolman Hall at the University of California at Berkeley was used. Paintings were placed on the walls, and a thick foam pad was placed on the floor and covered by a rug. It was on this mattress pad that the subject was hypnotized while the experimenter sat on a cushion a few feet away. The individual sessions were conducted in the evenings in order to ensure a more quiet and secure atmosphere. The lighting in the room was low and soft, and the subject was aware that all precautions had been taken to prevent anyone from disturbing the experiment once in progress.

The experimenter talked at length with each subject before each of

the sessions in order to establish a trusting relationship. All subjects were asked how he/she felt about entering into deep hypnosis and what his/her feelings were about the experimental situation. It was stressed that the subject could feel free to go to deeper or lighter levels of hypnosis during the session. The experimenter felt that the trusting relationship between hypnotist and subject was especially important in inducing subjects to go very deeply into hypnosis. Therefore, special emphasis was placed on the establishment of trust and confidentiality.

The structure of the sessions was as non-demanding as possible. Subjects were told that there was no time limit on how long they could stay in hypnosis, nor was there any need to even go deeply into hypnosis if they did not so desire. The experimenter told the subjects that the experiment was an exploratory one, and that he did not have any expectations about the nature of their experiences in deep hypnosis.

Experimental Procedure

Two weeks before the first deep hypnosis session, the investigator administered the Rorschach test to each of the subjects using Rapaport's (1946) modification of administration by conducting the inquiry after each card. The subjects, during the same session, were then given a battery of psychological tests which included the Gough Adjective Check List, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory. After subjects completed these tests, they were administered the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire to gain a baseline measure of their experience of altered states of consciousness in an awake state. A summary chart of the research design is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Overview of the Design

Personality Assessment Session
1. The Rorschach Test is administered to the subject.
2. The subject completes self-report inventories which include the Adjective Check List, the Myers-Briggs Inventory, and the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory. (Subjects have already taken the MMPI prior to the hypnosis training.)
3. The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire is administered to the subject.
Deep Hypnosis Session I
1. Questionnaire is administered to the subject to gain information on his/her experiences with, and attitudes towards altered states of consciousness.
2. The subject is asked to write down his/her expectations.
3. The subject is briefed about the depth scale and verbalization of experience.
4. The subject is given a standard counting induction.
5. The subject verbalizes his/her experiences to the experimenter and reports on depth. (The session is tape recorded.)
6. When the subject feels he/she is ready to come out of hypnosis he/she is told to go to depth of 20.
7. The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire is administered to the subject.
8. The subject comes out of hypnosis with the help of the experimenter who counts the subject out.
9. The subject fills out a questionnaire describing his/her experiences in deep hypnosis.
Deep Hypnosis Session II
1. The subject is briefed about the experimental tasks.
2. The subject is given a standardized counting induction.
3. The subject verbalizes his/her experiences and reports on depth to experimenter. (The session is tape recorded.)
4. When the subject feels he/she is ready to come out of hypnosis he/she is told to go to depth of 20.
5. The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire is administered to the subject.
6. The subject comes out of hypnosis with the help of the experimenter who counts the subject out.

7. The subject fills out a questionnaire describing his/her experiences in deep hypnosis.
8. The subject is debriefed about the experiment.
9. The subject is paid $10 for his/her participation in the research.

When the subject arrived for the first individual experimental session, he/she was given a questionnaire asking him/her to describe his/her expectations about what he/she might experience in deep hypnosis, as well as a questionnaire asking him/her to describe his/her attitudes and experiences with different altered states of consciousness (see Appendix A).

The subject was then briefed about the experimental procedure. He/she was told about the exploratory nature of the experiment and that there were no pre-existing hypotheses that must be proved. The subject was told that he/she would be able to go only as deeply as he/she wanted into hypnosis, and that he/she was not expected to experience anything during the session. The subject was then told that he/she should try to let go of any expectations he/she might have so that he/she could let himself experience whatever emerged spontaneously. Each subject was then told about the depth scale which ranged from 0 to 100. He/she was told that the experimenter would ask him/her every five minutes what depth he/she was at and what he/she was experiencing at that depth. The subject was also told that he/she should feel free to communicate to the experimenter at any time during the hypnosis sessions. The subject was next told that the session would be tape recorded and then he/she was shown the tape recorder and microphone which were located several feet away. (When the actual session began, the microphone was placed one foot away from the subject.) The subject was then told that he/she could stay in hypnosis for as long as he/she wanted, and that he/she should tell the experimenter when he/she wanted to re-emerge into a normal waking state of awareness.

Throughout this pre-briefing, the experimenter attempted to place no implicit demands on the subject. The subject was told that he/she should go only as deeply as he/she wanted into hypnosis and to just let whatever happens happen.

The subject was then asked to get into a relaxed position on the mattress pad. The experimenter then utilized a standardized counting procedure for the hypnotic induction. This counting induction was used during the hypnosis training sessions and all of the subjects were very familiar with it. When the subject was in hypnosis the experimenter would ask the neutral questions "what depth are you at?" and "what are you experiencing now?" every five minutes. After the subject expressed that he/she wanted to come out of hypnosis he/she was told to come to depth twenty. The Linton-Langs Inventory was then administered to obtain a measure of the degree of alteration of consciousness while in hypnosis. The inventory yielded measures on seven dimensions: alteration in thinking, disturbed time sense, loss of control, meaning change, affect change, body image change, and somatic change. After the administration of the Linton-Langs Questionnaire was concluded, the subject was counted out of hypnosis by the experimenter. The subject was then given a questionnaire which asked him/her to write down their hypnotic experiences and their reactions to the experimenter (see Appendix A). When he/she had completed this, the experimenter made an appointment with the subject for another session which was conducted two weeks later.

The second session was much like the first in terms of procedure. The only difference was in the de-briefing after the hypnosis session. The experimenter spoke to each subject at length about their experiences in hypnosis and how they viewed their experiences. When this was concluded, each subject was paid ten dollars for their participation in the research.

Dependent Measures

Scoring and Coding Procedures

All of the deep hypnosis sessions were tape recorded and transcribed and a content analysis was performed. This was done to obtain an experiential grouping of the different phenomena which were reported by subjects in deep hypnosis.

The scoring of all the self-report inventories, which included the Adjective Check List (Gough, 1965), the Myers-Briggs Inventory (Myers, 1962), the Barron Ego-Strength Scale (Barron, 1953), the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Questionnaire (Fitzgerald, 1966) and the Linton-Langs Questionnaire (Linton & Langs, 1962) was carried out following the scoring procedures which were explicated by the authors of the tests in the articles and manuals which are cited above. The Beck scoring system (Beck, 1961) was utilized in the scoring of the Rorschach test.

Comparisons and Statistical Analyses

Total scores from the Linton-Langs Questionnaire obtained during the three experimental conditions were compared using a repeated measures analysis of variance design (Keppel, 1973). This analysis was performed to determine if subjects experienced increased altered state phenomena while in deep hypnosis.

Correlations were also performed between total scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire obtained from the three experimental conditions and scores on Rorschach Movement, Rorschach Form Level, the Barron Ego-Strength Scale, the Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory, and the Introversion-Extraversion, Intuition-Sensation, Feeling-Thinking and Perception-Judgment dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Inventory. Correlations were also performed between

the above listed personality tests and change scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. Change scores were derived by subtracting total scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire obtained from the two deep hypnosis sessions from total scores obtained on the questionnaire given in the awake state.

It was hypothesized that such personality dimensions as Rorschach Movement, Rorschach Form Level, ego-strength, openness to experience, and measures of introversion, intuition, and perception would be positively correlated with scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire obtained during the two deep hypnosis sessions. Subjects who scored highly on these personality dimensions were also expected to experience a large quantity of altered state phenomena while in deep hypnosis as measured by the Linton-Langs Questionnaire.

SECTION III
RESULTS

Overview

The results of this study can be divided into two distinct parts. The first is an analysis of subjective experience in deep hypnosis as measured by the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire and by a content analysis of the subjects' statements during hypnosis. The second part is an analysis of the relationship between personality variables and experiences in deep hypnosis. In the first part of the study it was found that experiences in the deep hypnotic conditions can be distinguished from the waking baseline condition on the total score of the Linton-Langs Questionnaire and on six of the seven subscales of the questionnaire: alteration in thinking, disturbed time sense, loss of control, meaning change, body image change and somatic change. The remaining subscale, the affect change scale, did not show a significant change from the waking condition to the deep hypnosis conditions. Subjects did

not experience pronounced changes in mood during deep hypnosis, which is counter to the popular myth that hypnosis can cause dramatic changes in affect. A content analysis of the deep hypnosis protocols revealed that subjects experienced pronounced changes in their somatic functioning and in the conception of their body image during the beginning of the hypnotic sessions. Subjects reported a great quantity of vivid imagery throughout the sessions. At very deep levels of hypnosis, which usually occurred one-half hour after the induction, subjects experienced the following phenomena: feeling immersed in blackness, images of floating in an infinite expanse, feeling a sense of oneness with the surroundings, and feeling a sense of awe and wonder.

The second area of the study, the relationship between personality variables and experiences in deep hypnosis, yielded results which did not support the original hypothesis. On most of the dimensions used to measure ego functioning it was found that the interaction of personality variables and hypnotic experience was minimal. These results pointed to the conclusion that the experiences which occur in deep hypnosis are state-related and not strongly personality-related.

An analysis of the personality data revealed that the group of subjects who participated in the study were all functioning at a high level of ego integration. Their Rorschachs show them to be an imaginative group who have contact with their unconscious processes which are viewed as non-threatening. They score high as a group on various measures of ego strength (Barron Ego-Strength Scale and Rorschach F+%) and demonstrate an ability to experience regression in the service, and not to the detriment, of the ego. These results point to the conclusion that the experiences described in this research are generalizable to a population which possesses

both ego-strength and ego-resilience. The results of this study are not generalizable to clinical populations that demonstrate weak ego-strength. Although this technique has not been tried with psychotic personalities, it is expected that they would respond quite differently to being in deep hypnosis, and would probably experience the hypnotic situation as being anxiety-arousing.

Description of the Subjects

The subjects in this study were given a series of personality tests to gain both a picture of their overall personality functioning and to determine the interrelationship between personality factors and responses to deep hypnosis. Analysis of the Rorschach protocols (Table 2) revealed that the subjects are functioning at a high level of ego development. Their mean F+% of 74.4 (a high score) indicates that they are able to view reality clearly without the restraints of constricted defenses and controls. Subjects had a mean of 8.6 movement responses on the Rorschach, indicating an ability to utilize the imagination and a close contact with unconscious processes which are viewed as non-threatening. The large number of M responses produced by these subjects indicates a capacity for inner creativity and an ability to become aware of and to appreciate inner experiences. The subjects place a great deal of reliance upon their own sense of self and their own individual view of the world. They do not depend upon external reality alone for the formulation of their beliefs and values.

Table 2
Summary of Personality Assessment

Measure	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
Rorschach F+%	74.4	64-100	9.94
Rorschach Movement	8.6	5-15	3.14
Barron Ego-Strength	49.6	43-58	5.4
Fitzgerald Openness	41.3	33-50	6.05
Myer-Briggs Inventory preference for:			
extraversion 50%	39.4	23-49	10.46
introversion 50%	15	1-41	13.74
intuition 90%	29.9	3-43	11.2
sensation 10%	Too few N to calculate		
thinking 50%	7.8	1-17	6.76
feeling 50%	14.2	1-23	10.01
perception 70%	11.6	3-21	6.9
judgment 30%	4.3	3-7	1.9

The Adjective Check List was used to obtain a profile of the subjects' personalities on a wide range of variables related to normal (versus pathological) areas of personality functioning. Means and standard deviations for all of the ACL subscales are shown in Table 3, and a profile for the group is plotted in Figure 1. Table 4 lists the adjectives which were checked both most frequently and least frequently by the subjects in describing themselves. An analysis of the ACL revealed that the subjects are all functioning at a high level of effectiveness and are well adapted to their environments.

Table 3
Adjective Check List Scores

Scale	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
total number of adjectives	59.8	44-91	13.61
defensiveness	51.0	40-61	5.90
number of favorable adjectives checked	55.7	36-65	7.70
number of unfavorable adjectives checked	49.2	37-67	9.04
self-confidence	56.3	44-66	6.97
self-control	47.9	38-59	5.98
lability	57.7	49-72	7.95
personal adjustment	48.1	41-57	4.52
achievement	55.1	47-64	5.01
dominance	55.2	41-69	9.26
endurance	51.7	46-56	3.66
order	50.7	43-62	4.63
intraception	54.3	45-62	4.78
nurturance	53.8	45-60	4.17
affiliation	52.0	37-62	6.91
heterosexuality	59.6	25-71	12.90
exhibition	57.7	44-69	8.28
autonomy	55.6	49-70	6.00
aggression	51.3	36-61	6.75
change	53.4	45-62	5.20
succorance	48.0	39-67	10.46
abasement	45.5	37-67	8.81
deference	44.0	36-57	6.91
counseling readiness	51.4	44-64	7.40

Figure 1
Profile Sheet for Mean Adjective Check List Scores

(**Editor's note**: Omitted due to size)

The ACL results demonstrate that the subjects, on the whole, have a favorable view of themselves and are motivated to present themselves in a positive light in their interpersonal relationships. They have well defined controls over their aggressive and hostile impulses, but they are not obsessively rigid in their use of defensive ego mechanisms. The subjects on the ACL appear to have a large amount of self-confidence and self-assurance. They are not self-punitive or overly critical of their thoughts and actions. The subjects view themselves as being active, kind, and understanding. They are outgoing and assertive and want to get things done.

On the need scales of the ACL, subjects show a need to achieve and to be involved in intellectual endeavors. These motives appear to be internal and goal-centered rather than competitive. Subjects also demonstrate traits of perseverance and resourcefulness, although they are not obsessively methodical and rigid. They are empathic in their relationships with others and are able to give emotional support and understanding.

Table 4
Adjective Check List Results

Adjectives Checked by 100% of Subjects
active, affectionate, alert, appreciative, assertive, curious, emotional, friendly, healthy, kind, self-confident, sensitive, rational, understanding
Adjectives Checked by 90% of Subjects
adaptable, capable, clear-thinking, confident, considerate, cooperative, dependable, determined, easy going, energetic, helpful, honest, idealistic, independent, intelligent, interests wide, mature, natural, pleasant, realistic, reasonable, reliable, responsible, sincere, stable, tolerant, trusting, warm
Adjectives Checked by 10% of Subjects
aloof, arrogant, boastful, careless, complaining, conservative, distrustful, dull, egotistical, fickle, forgetful, fussy, gloomy, greedy, high-strung, indifferent, infantile, irresponsible, nervous, polished, prudish, quarrelsome, queer, rattlebrained, reckless, retiring, self-punishing, selfish, shallow, show off, shrewd, slow, spendthrift, spineless, stingy, submissive, sulky, superstitious, tactless, tense, tough, unassuming, unemotional, unintelligent, unrealistic, unstable, vindictive, weak
Adjectives Not Checked by Any Subjects
apathetic, autocratic, bitter, blustery, coarse, cold, conventional, cruel, deceitful, despondent, effeminate, formal, hard-hearted, hostile, interests narrow, intolerant, nagging, obnoxious, pessimistic, prejudiced, quitting, rigid, rude, severe, shiftless, slipshod, smug, snobbish, stern, stolid, thankless, unaffected, unambitious, undependable, unexcitable, unfriendly, unkind, unscrupulous, whiny

In terms of affiliation, they are able to seek and sustain personal friendships without being anxious to please. The subjects derive emotional satisfactions from interactions with peers of the opposite sex and appear to be very outgoing in this respect. They are not apt to be aggressive in hurtful ways toward others, not do they need to diminish another's stature through hostile criticism.

Scores on the Barron Ego-Strength Scale (Table 2) indicate that the subjects possess resourcefulness, vitality, and self-direction, all qualities which Barron (1953) believes are part of ego-strength. The hypnotic subjects scored highly on this scale when compared to the samples Barron (1953) used in his original study. Scores on Fitzgerald's Openness to Experience Inventory (Table 2) indicate that the subjects do not utilize constricting repressive mechanisms. The subjects show an ability to loosen their fixed anticipations and sets and approach their experience in novel and different ways.

On the Myers-Briggs Indicator (Table 2), nine of the ten subjects showed a preference for intuition, which again points to the inner resourcefulness of these subjects. They are able to utilize their own inner subjective processes to develop an individualized view of themselves and the world around them. Subjects were equally divided on the introversion-extraversion and thinking-feeling dimensions. Seven of the ten subjects showed a preference for perception versus judgment which indicates that most of the subjects exhibit an open-minded attitude towards their experience and are able to let things happen without quickly passing judgment on the experience.

Attitudes and Expectations

Each subject was given a questionnaire to describe his/her attitude towards altered states of consciousness. All of the subjects held very positive attitudes towards altered states of awareness produced by either yoga, hypnosis or meditation. Some typical responses follow:

> I have very positive, hopeful, enthusiastic feelings about altered states of consciousness. I believe these states can be used as a more lucid way of perceiving the world . . . People

> need to experiment with and explore their potential for mind expansion and discontinue the narrow, one-dimensional way in which they perceive the world.
>
> Generally, my attitude towards altered states are favorable. Altered states both interest and fascinate me.
>
> Altered states often yield a look at the world that is not obtainable by normal, everyday activities. They can enlarge self-awareness and self-consciousness.
>
> I find altered sates of consciousness to be very interesting experiences that I have not yet fully explained to myself. I do not fear any of these different states.

Five of the subjects expressed reserved attitudes towards altered states of awareness produced by hallucinogenic drugs such as LSD and marijuana. What follows is a sample of some of these apprehensions.

> I am somewhat apprehensive of psychedelics and other drugs that alter the state of awareness, as I do not know enough about their effects.
>
> Psychedelic drugs, since they are chemically powerful and no one is sure about what actually happens to a person's neurophysiology, are dangerous.

The subjects had varied experiences with different altered states of consciousness. These experiences are summarized in Table 5. Three of the subjects meditate and practice yoga daily. Four of the subjects use marijuana at least once per week and two of the subjects use psychedelics such as LSD once per month. Their use of different means to alter states of consciousness is not atypical for Berkeley undergraduate students who have a strong interest in psychology.

Table 5
Subjects' Experiences with Different Altered States of Consciousness

Subject	Meditation	Yoga	Marijuana	Psychedelics
one	daily	daily	once per week	once per month
two	daily	daily	three times per week	infrequently (once a year)
three	no	no	five times in life	no
four	no	no	once per month	no
five	no	no	once every two weeks	has tried three times
six	no	no	twice per week	once per month
seven	no	no	three times per week	no
eight	daily	daily	no	has tried four times
nine	no	no	no	no
ten	no	no	once per month	no

During the assessment stage of the research, and before the deep hypnosis sessions took place, subjects were requested to write down their expectations of what they thought the deep hypnosis would be like. Their speculations are shown in Table 6. All of the subjects felt that the deep hypnosis experience would be a pleasant one, but none were able to describe the varied phenomena which actually occurred during the deep hypnosis sessions. Several of the subjects described expectations of tingling sensations, sensations of their body spinning, and sensations of floating. The subjects who described these phenomena reported that they had experienced these sensations during the hypnosis training sessions when they were at their deepest levels. These subjects also expected that during hypnosis they would remain at a sensory level of experience. None of the subjects were able to

describe any of the experiences which regularly occurred during the deeper levels of hypnosis, such as loss of body image, feelings of oneness with the surroundings, or the experience of emptiness involving no thoughts or images.

Table 6
Expectations About the Hypnotic State

Subject	Expectations
one	I expect to get a better idea of what my mind is capable of doing.
two	Deep hypnosis will give me an opportunity to explore realms I have never reached before.
three	I want to be able to understand myself better, to bring to the fore feelings and emotions that in my everyday life have been repressed.
four	I expect to get into contact with personal and meaningful images.
five	It will be a kind of exploration of my mind, similar to dreaming. During the hypnosis training I reached a place where I was no longer aware of the surroundings or the hypnotist's voice. It was a pleasant place to be.
six	I expect very satisfying physical sensations, ease of tension and tingling feelings which I have found to always accompany hypnosis. I am not really sure what lies down there.
seven	I expect to feel high, like smoking marijuana. I expect to feel loose, comfortable, mellow, uninhibited and free-flowing.
eight	I don't know what to expect, maybe something exciting or relaxing. My recollection of my deepest hypnotic state was letting my mind float. I felt as if my mind was floating in space like a liquid. It was very enjoyable and relaxing.
nine	I expect to go to places I have never been before. I think it will be very rewarding.
ten	I expect to experience physical sensations. During the training sessions I experienced sliding and rotating motions. These sensations were pleasurable and I expect my forthcoming experiences will be somewhat similar.

Subjective Reactions in Deep Hypnosis - Results of the Linton-Langs Questionnaire

The Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire was utilized to gain an overview of the subjective aspects of the deep hypnosis experience. The questionnaire was administered three times to each subject; first in an awake state to obtain a baseline measure, and then at the end of each of the two deep hypnosis sessions while the subject was in a light state of hypnosis. A repeated measures analysis of variance design (Keppel, 1973) was utilized, and comparisons involving the treatment means were performed. Means for the total questionnaire scores and for each of the seven subscores are presented in Table 7. (All analyses of variance tables are in Appendix B.) [Editor's note: The tables in Appendix B, Analysis of Variance, can be found in the original dissertation and have been deleted here to save space.]

Table 7
Results of the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire

Waking State Scores			
Scale	**mean**	**range**	**s.d**
Total Linton-Langs Scale			
Waking State Scores	**11.9**	**6-24**	**5.76**
Session One Scores	**32.0**	**23-42**	**5.76**
Session Two Scores	**32.7**	**23-39**	**4.50**
Alteration in Thinking Scale (13 items)			
Waking State Scores	**2.1**	**0-5**	**1.64**
Session One Scores	**6.0**	**4-9**	**1.41**
Session Two Scores	**6.6**	**5-9**	**1.20**

Disturbed Time Sense Scale (4 items)			
Waking State Scores	1.0	0-2	.77
Session One Scores	2.5	2-3	.5
Session Two Scores	2.1	1-4	1.22
Loss of Control Scale (16 items)			
Waking State Scores	.7	0-2	.64
Session One Scores	5.4	4-8	1.37
Session Two Scores	4.7	3-6	1.00
Meaning Change Scale (6 items)			
Waking State Scores	2.2	1-4	.98
Session One Scores	3.9	1-6	1.92
Session Two Scores)	3.7	1-6	1.49
Affect Change Scale (5 items)			
Waking State Scores	1.6	0-3	1.11
Session One Scores	1.4	0-5	1.36
Session Two Scores	1.3	0-4	1.27
Body Image Change Scale (10 items)			
Waking State Scores	1.5	0-4	1.28
Session One Scores	6.2	2-8	1.66
Session Two Scores	6.1	4-9	1.64
Somatic Change Scale (11 items)			
Waking State Scores	.8	0-2	.87
Session One Scores	4.4	2-8	1.96
Session Two Scores	5.0	2-7	1.34

Total Linton-Langs Scores

On the total Linton-Langs Questionnaire, significant differences were found between scores obtained during the waking state and scores obtained during the two deep hypnosis sessions ($F=57.49$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). Scores obtained during the two deep hypnosis sessions were significantly higher than scores obtained during the waking state. This difference between waking state and hypnosis was true for both the first deep hypnosis session ($F=90.7$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$) as well as the second deep hypnosis session ($F=19.97$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). The scores for the two deep hypnosis sessions were not different from each other ($F=.161$, n.s.). Analysis of each of the seven subscales revealed the same general pattern as that for the total scores.

Alteration of Thinking Scale

On this scale which measures disturbances in concentration, attention, memory, and judgment, scores obtained during the two deep hypnosis sessions were significantly higher than scores obtained during the waking state ($F=29.41$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). This difference was also true for scores obtained during the waking state and scores obtained on this scale during the first deep hypnosis session ($F=26.87$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). Similarly, scores were significantly higher during the second deep hypnosis session as opposed to scores obtained during the waking state ($F=45.00$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). No significant difference was found between scores obtained during the first and second deep hypnosis sessions ($F=1.76$, n.s.).

The questions on this subscale which revealed the greatest difference between the awake and the hypnotic conditions pertained to feelings that experiences were illogical and disconnected, along with a sense of losing control of thoughts which were moving both faster and slower than usual. Subjects also felt that during deep hypnosis

some idea, thought or image kept coming back to them again and again. Thought processes in hypnosis appeared to be illogical and unstructured in content and proceeded with a different tempo than in an awake state of consciousness.

Disturbed Time Sense Scale

Scores on this scale given during the three experimental conditions indicated that subjects experienced significantly more time distortion during the two deep hypnosis sessions than during the waking state ($F=6.57$, $df=2/18$, $p<.01$). Subjects universally reported that their temporal perspective underwent a profound alteration, and that time was experienced as having no meaning. Further analysis indicated that scores were significantly higher (more time alteration) during the first deep hypnosis session as opposed to the waking state ($F=23.94$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). However, this finding is primarily due to the difference between the first hypnosis session and the waking state. A significant difference was not found between scores on this scale obtained during the second deep hypnosis session and the waking state ($F=3.52$, n.s.). Nevertheless, the scores for the two hypnosis sessions did not differ from each other ($F=1.40$, n.s.).

Loss of Control Scale

The loss of control scale measures such dimensions as fears of losing one's grip on reality, the inability to control emotions and the feeling of loss of self control. Subjects experienced marked increases in feelings of loss of control during the two deep hypnosis sessions as compared to the waking state ($F=61.83$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). The items on this scale which showed the most change during the deep hypnosis sessions were related to feelings of unreality, feelings of loss of control, difficulty in speech and movement, and items which pertained to hallucinatory experiences.

Experiences of loss of control were markedly increased during the first deep hypnosis session as opposed to the waking state ($F=197.2$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). This same direction of difference was found when scores on this scale obtained during the second deep hypnosis session were compared to scores obtained during the waking state ($F=102.56$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). The two deep hypnosis sessions did not differ in the degree to which feelings of loss of control were experienced ($F=1.38$, n.s.).

Meaning Change Scale

The Meaning Change Scale measures feelings of increased ability, understanding and judgment. Subjects during deep hypnosis reported that they felt they had acquired new powers and abilities, that certain things had taken on meanings they never had before, and that they felt their judgment and ability to evaluate were different from usual. There was a significant increase in scores obtained on this scale during the two deep hypnosis sessions over the waking state scores ($F=4.32$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). This indicates that in deep hypnosis, subjects experienced feelings of increased ability and understanding. This difference between waking state and hypnosis scores on this scale was true for both the first deep hypnosis session ($F=5.41$, $df=1/9$, $p<.05$), as well as the second deep hypnosis session ($F=5.26$, $df=1/9$, $p<.05$). The two deep hypnosis sessions were not distinguishable from each other in regard to changes in meaning ($F=.17$, n.s.).

Affect Change Scale

The Affect Change Scale measures a wide range of emotions which include feelings of depression, sadness, happiness, silliness, fear, upset, anger, and annoyance. Subjects did not report marked changes in their affective experience while in hypnosis ($F=.18$, n.s.). These results seem to dispel some of the popular myths about hypnosis,

i.e., that strong emotional changes take place while under its influence. Only one of the hypnotic subjects experienced feelings of sadness during one of the sessions. This experience was associated with memories of her father's death which became very vivid for her while she was in deep hypnosis. Half of the subjects experienced feelings of happiness during the deep hypnosis sessions, but the same number of subjects experienced such feelings in the awake state.

Body Image Change Scale

Marked changes in the body image were universally reported by subjects while they were in deep hypnosis. Items on this scale which showed the most difference from the awake state related to feelings of melting and merging into the surroundings, reports that the body looked or felt strange, feelings that some part of the body was disconnected or somehow did not belong to the rest of the body, feelings of being a different person, feeling lighter, feelings of floating, and feeling heavier than usual.

As with many of the other scales, a significant increase in reported body image changes was found between scores obtained during the waking state and during the two deep hypnotic sessions ($F=37.56$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). The first hypnosis session was also distinguishable from the waking state ($F=82.43$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$) as was the second deep hypnosis session ($F=47.23$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). No difference was found between the two hypnosis sessions on the amount of body image changes reported ($F=.02$, n.s.).

Somatic Change Scale

The Somatic Change Scale measures such experiences as dizziness, numbness, nausea and weakness. Subjects reported experiencing pronounced increases in somatic changes during the two hypnosis sessions, and these changes were clearly distinguisha-

ble from their waking responses to this scale ($F=22.05$, $df=2/18$, $p<.001$). Sensations of dizziness, grogginess, numbness, tingling and heat were the most common somatic changes experienced by the subjects during the deep hypnosis sessions. Waking state scores on this scale were significantly lower than scores obtained during the first hypnosis session ($F=29.19$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$) as were scores obtained during the second deep hypnosis sessions ($F=47.17$, $df=1/9$, $p<.001$). There was not a significant difference between amount of somatic change reported during the two deep hypnosis sessions ($F=.62$, n.s.).

Deep hypnosis can be clearly differentiated from the waking state on many parameters as measured by the subscales of the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. Moreover, practice with deep hypnosis does not appear to affect the degree of alteration of consciousness experienced. There was no scale in which differences between the scores obtained during the two deep hypnosis sessions were significantly different.

The Phenomenology of the Hypnotic State

All of the hypnosis sessions were recorded and transcribed and a content analysis was performed. A summary of the different experiences which occurred in deep hypnosis are found in Table 8. In Table 8 each experience is listed along with its mean time of occurrence, its mean reported depth, the number of subjects who reported the experience, and the category of the experience. It was found that experiences during the deep hypnosis sessions fit into four major categories: changes in physical sensations (1), body image changes (2), various types of mental imagery (3), and transpersonal experiences (4). Transpersonal experiences involve an extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and the limitations of time and space. One of the few experiences which did not fit into these four categories was experienced during the very beginning of the hypnotic sessions. Immediately follow-

ing the induction, subjects experienced recurring thoughts, usually pertaining to issues that were of concern to them immediately before the experimental sessions. Subjects reported that these thoughts were usually of a trivial nature and that they impeded their going into a very relaxed state. A detailed description of the four general types of experiences follows. Experiences which occurred early in the sessions will be described before experiences which were reported at a later time.

TABLE 8
Time of Onset and Reported Depth of Experiences Occurring During Deep Hypnosis (both sessions combined)

Experience	Category of Experience	Mean Time (in minutes)	s.d.	Mean Reported Depth	s.d.	Number of Subjects Reporting Experience
Recurring thoughts	None	12.6	2.98	33.0	10.54	6
Sensation of heaviness in the body	1	15.1	5.46	33.9	9.67	9
Sensation of floating	1	15.6	8.15	30.3	15.62	8
Sensation of heat in the body	1	16.3	8.60	43.9	7.30	10
Tingling sensations in the body	1	17.6	6.62	46.3	14.79	8
Body image becoming smaller	2	19.0	8.00	52.4	16.68	5
Sensation of downward movement – sinking	1	19.7	7.92	46.3	22.78	8
Body image bending	2	20.0	7.91	45.6	15.97	8
Sensation of body spinning	1	20.3	4.13	42.8	12.03	6

Experience	Category of Experience	Mean Time (in minutes)	s.d.	Mean Reported Depth	s.d.	Number of Subjects Reporting Experience
Body image becoming larger	2	22.8	6.82	45.6	12.20	8
Body image "melting"	2	23.1	9.88	46.6	11.88	10
Body image becoming flatter – spreading out	2	25.0	12.25	55.6	16.42	9
Auditory hallucinations (occurring with visual imagery)	3	25.7	16.37	58.6	27.29	7
Throbbing sensations in body	1	26.7	6.84	59.5	18.69	6
Images of nature	3	27.1	9.99	55.0	12.35	10
Sensation of upward movement – flying	1	27.8	15.08	53.0	9.92	10
Hallucinated loss of body part	2	28.6	9.28	49.4	12.00	8
Images of geometric shapes	3	28.7	17.36	48.1	15.42	7
Feeling immersed in darkness	4	28.8	8.76	60.0	14.36	8
Sensation of body floating in an infinite expanse	1	30.5	9.86	61.0	9.43	10
Numbness in body	1	34.4	12.69	66.4	13.81	9
Sensation of lightness in body	1	35.0	12.54	73.7	17.95	7
Loss of bodily sensations	1	35.1	13.98	63.8	9.97	10
Personal memories	3	35.2	17.33	59.4	26.63	8
Images of people or animals	3	35.7	12.41	62.2	13.46	9
Sensation of energy moving through the body	1	36.0	11.58	59.0	9.70	5

Experience	Category of Experience	Mean Time (in minutes)	s.d.	Mean Reported Depth	s.d.	Number of Subjects Reporting Experience
Feeling of oneness with surroundings	4	36.5	10.74	66.5	18.45	10
Feeling of peacefulness, calmness	4	37.5	14.71	61.5	12.66	10
Felling of coldness in the body	1	38.9	8.46	78.0	12.88	5
Feelings of anxiety	4	42.0	20.40	68.0	18.33	5
No thoughts or images – feeling of emptiness	4	47.2	13.84	77.8	20.75	9
Feeling of being in a different reality	4	47.2	12.36	83.9	11.23	9
Feelings of joy and extreme happiness	4	51.4	19.11	83.6	17.74	7
Experience of contacting the self	4	53.1	16.46	76.4	21.8	8
Feelings of awe and wonder, "religious feelings"	4	54.0	17.15	81.0	10.68	5
Feelings of extreme sadness*	4	70.0	*	100.0	*	1

* N too small to calculate standard deviation

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1. Changes in Physical Sensations

The first physical sensations reported by subjects as they entered into hypnosis were sensations of heaviness. Nine subjects reported a variety of types of experiences involving heaviness. The head was the first part of the body which was reported as becoming heavy. After this, subjects experienced their arms and legs become heavier, and this was followed by the experience of their whole body being very heavy. Floating sensations were experienced by

eight subjects early in the hypnosis sessions and always followed sensations of heaviness. Subjects experienced themselves floating in warm water which was always described as being very comfortable and relaxing.

One subject described the sensations of floating as follows:

> It feels like you're just about ready to drop to the ground, but you're not, you're just there. It seems like any minute you'll get heavy and fall, but you're not heavy, you're light and you just stay there . . . my body can't feel the mat I'm on even though I know it's there.

Sensations of heat in the body were universally experienced by subjects early in the hypnosis sessions. Often, sensations of warmth were accompanied by imagery of being in a warm bed or being immersed in warm water. One subject described these sensations of warmth in the following manner:

> My body feels very relaxed and warm. The warm feelings are mostly coming from the center of my back . . . it feels very warm, like it's heating the rest of my body.

Occasionally, warmth was not experienced in a pleasant manner. One subject experienced a great deal of anxiety accompanying his feelings of warmth in his body. A portion of the transcript from that hypnosis session describes this experience:

> I'm not too comfortable. I feel warmer than I want to be . . . I'm very hot in my forehead, across my shoulders and also down at my feet. I'm very warm and I don't feel too good . . . I feel nauseous . . . the heat is concentrated in my stomach and goes down to my legs . . . it is unpleasant, it is burning, my stomach is the source of all of the heat . . . I'm burning up. I

> feel like I'm in the middle of a fire. On the outside my arms are very hot, but on the inside I can't feel anything.

This experience of tremendous heat was very distressing for the subject. It is interesting to note that this subject was the only sensation type on the Myers-Briggs Inventory. His physical reactions to the deep hypnosis situation were by far the most intense of any of the subjects in the experiment.

Tingling sensations in the body were also experienced during the beginning stages of the deep hypnosis sessions by eight of the subjects. The tingling sensations were first experienced in the extremities of the body, in the hands and feet, and then were experienced throughout the whole body. The tingling sensations were universally felt as being pleasant.

Following this, a very strong sensation which was described by subjects as taking them very deeply into hypnosis was the sensation of downward movement and sinking. These sensations were experienced by eight of the subjects. Subjects described these sinking sensations in the following manner:

> I'm falling down a deep cave, going through doors and hidden passages, dark, moist and secretive …

> I am sliding down a sliding board, I am going very fast.

> Feel like I'm going down, my feet are sliding down first. It feels like gravity is pushing me down.

> I seem to be going deeper and deeper . . . it feels like everything in my head is sinking down . . . I get this tremendous sinking feeling, everything is just sinking under water.

Some of the strongest changes in physical sensations occurred with the sensations of spinning which the subjects experienced next. Six of the ten subjects experienced this type of sensation. Spinning sensations were often accompanied by feelings of anxiety. Subjects described these spinning sensations as follows:

> I'm on a rotating platform, it's scary, it's going from the left to the right . . . it's like being on a roller coaster . . . it is making me dizzy . . . my head goes to my feet and it makes my stomach upset.

> It feels like I'm spinning around . . . the whole room is just spinning around . . . whenever I start to think of my body it's just spinning . . . I don't even have to think of it happening. It will slow down and almost stop and then it will just come on again . . . then it speeds up . . . and everything just circles around . . . like on a merry-go-round. It feels as if I'm on a gigantic circular soft bed. It's being given a shove and it goes around.

Some subjects became nauseous and dizzy as a result of these spinning sensations which were often associated with fears of loss of control and letting go. One subject experienced herself as if she were in an airplane that kept doing flips. This experience gave her a sense of vertigo and also nausea. These types of spinning sensations did not last very long while the subject was in hypnosis, and none of the subjects felt the need to terminate the hypnotic sessions at that time.

Next, throbbing sensations were experienced by six of the hypnotic subjects. These sensations occurred in many different parts of the body. Mostly they were associated with the movements and pulsations of the heart. Subjects reported being very sensitive to their heart beats while they were in hypnosis, and the throbbing sensations were closely related to that type of movement. Often,

subjects felt that their whole bodies were pulsating. These pulsating sensations indicated to the subjects that they were more sensitive to their own internal physiological processes during the hypnosis sessions that during their waking state.

Sensations of upward movement and flying were experienced by all ten hypnotic subjects during moderate levels of hypnosis. Sensations of flying were usually experienced as being pleasurable. One subject described the experience of flying as follows:

> I feel like I'm above the clouds flying. The wind is blowing in my face and I'm trying to push my head forward. The wind is brisk and cold but my body feels warm. All of a sudden the resistance against the wind is nonexistent and there is a beautiful orange sunset above dark clouds.

Sensations of flying were experienced as leading the subject very deeply into hypnosis. Subjects expressed that through the experience of upward movement and flying they were able to completely relinquish control over the hypnotic experience and begin to feel that the hypnotic process was taking them to areas of experience which were both novel and meaningful.

As subjects went more deeply into hypnosis, they began to feel that they were floating in an infinite space. This sensation was experienced by all ten subjects and was universally reported as being a pleasant experience. The sensation of floating in an infinite expansive space had associated with it feelings of awe and wonder. During these experiences subjects said that they felt as if they were exploring an infinite expanse inside of themselves which they had never encountered before.

Sensations of the body becoming numb occurred next in nine of the ten subjects. Subjects reported that the numbness in their bodies was

associated with feelings of intense analgesia. Seven of the subjects experienced these sensations of intense analgesia. Following this, as subjects went more deeply into hypnosis, they began to experience their bodies becoming very light. Seven of the subjects experienced these sensations of lightness which were associated with a sense of losing touch with physical sensations and internal physiological processes. The feeling of loss of all sensation in the body was experienced next by all ten subjects. This lack of sensation was associated with feelings of entering into an expansive, limitless realm of possibility described as an empty space or void by the subjects.

The sensation of energy moving through the body was another of the physical experiences subjects reported during deep levels of hypnosis. Five subjects experienced sensations of 'energy' in various parts of their bodies. Subjects described this experience as follows:

> I've been focusing on the small of my back. There seems to be a little opening there and all my energy is rushing out of that opening, particularly when I exhale.

> I feel like there is a lot of energy racing through my body. It starts at one hand and goes up the arm and then down one side and down the leg and up the other leg really fast and tightening the muscles everywhere it goes.

After this, and at deeper levels of hypnosis, five subjects experienced sensations of coldness in their bodies. These sensations usually were felt first in the extremities of the body (feet and hands) and then were experienced throughout the entire body.

2. Changes in the Body Image

Alterations in the body image were some of the most striking phenomena experienced by subjects when they entered into a hypnotic state.

The first distortion of the body image to occur in the deep hypnosis sessions was the sensation of the body becoming smaller. Five subjects reported that they felt parts of their bodies had become shorter. One subject experienced his whole body as being crumpled up in a small ball, while others felt that their limbs were becoming smaller first and then that their whole body was becoming very small.

The following group of body image distortions occurred in close temporal proximity to one another, and quickly followed the sensation of downward sinking movements. The first body image distortion which occurred was the image of the body bending. Eight subjects experienced their body image bending in a variety of different ways. Several subjects felt their bodies bending only in the middle, while others felt their complete bodies bend and form a circle with their feet touching their heads. Several other subjects felt just certain areas of their bodies bend. One subject just experienced his head bend, and then had an image of his head looking at his feet. Another subject experienced his arms bending and twisting on his body. Subjects reported the experience of the body bending in the subsequent manner:

> My body feels like it's bending at the waist with my head and my heels going to the left along a plane . . . The left side is contracting and the right side lengthening and the right side is reaching out towards the left . . . like a letter in an illuminated bible.

> My body feels like it's bending in the middle . . . from my head to my feet it doesn't seem like it is a straight line anymore . . . it feels like my left side is bending at an angle to the left . . . my hand feels like it's turning around on the wrist in circles . . . it doesn't feel like it's sitting on the mattress, it's up in space moving around.

Sensations of the body becoming larger occurred next in eight of the hypnotic subjects. These sensations were reported in many different forms. Some subjects felt their bodies expand like balloons, usually the head, hands, arms and feet. Others felt that their bodies were stuffed with various kinds of substances, such as paper or water. Closely associated with these sensations were sensations of the body melting into the mattress pad. Sensations of the body melting into the pad were experienced by all of the hypnotic subjects. These experiences were reported by subjects in the following manner:

> I feel melted into the floor, like a mountain range on a plain, just continuous with it.

> My body is melting into the pad like an ice cube. It feels good . . . now I feel like I don't have arms . . . they have melted right into the pad . . . it's hard to tell where my body begins and where the pad begins.

After this, sensations of the body getting flatter and spreading out were reported by nine subjects. Later in the sessions as subjects experienced themselves going more deeply into hypnosis, they began to report that different parts of their bodies no longer existed. Subjects reported that they felt as if they did not have arms or legs, and that it seemed as if they had melted completely into the mattress pad. As these types of experiences increased, subjects began to feel that they no longer were aware of their bodies. Subjects reported these experiences as follows:

> My body feels very relaxed, it's fading away. I can't feel it . . . I'm becoming invisible.

> My body is very detached, it feels like something breathing on its own, just there.

I imagined that the top part of my body just got up, sat up, it was a different substance, transparent, since it was a cellophane skeleton of my body getting up, the top part of my body got up, looked around and just stayed there; it didn't go anywhere.

I can't feel the outside of my body. I'm not encased in skin. There are no limits.

My body feels like it is in another world. I feel like I'm observing it from afar. I have no sense of feeling parts of my body.

It feels like my arms and legs are above me. They're not really part of me.

3. Imagery in Deep Hypnosis

Imagery played an important role throughout the deep hypnosis experience. Nature imagery was very pronounced during moderate levels of hypnosis and was reported by all of the subjects. Hypnotic subjects frequently reported that they were in verdant woods or mountain settings and always said that these scenes felt very pleasant. Some of the following reports give a sense of what these experiences were like for the subjects:

I see the ocean and a beach. The ocean is coming in. It keeps rolling in with the tide and the waves are crashing on the beach. It's really soothing.

I see mountains with snow on the top. They are purple and very majestic looking.

Several hypnotic subjects described seeing sunrises which were very colorful. One subject described this experience as follows:

> I see a sunrise over a horizon. It's just sitting there. You can see half of it with all the rays coming out behind it.

Many subjects described going down dark, moist caves and caverns. These images were experienced along with sensations of downward movement. A very vivid experience of going down a cave was given by one of the subjects when he reported that he was in very deep hypnosis.

> I'm going down a deep cave, going through doors and hidden passages that are dark, moist and secretive. I'm swimming down there in water. I came into a big, open cavern and I met these strange looking people two feet tall with fleshy colors, no necks, little faces and skinny arms and legs. They knew me very well, like they were close to me. They fed me something and gave me something to drink. I travelled with one and he asked me if I wanted to go deeper. He was like my best friend, like a mother. We went down some more, down some steps. It's like no human knows about it; a pool of water is there 20 feet across. He leaves me and I go deeper. I go in the water - he's left me. I'm going down; don't know what I'll find. I'm looking at myself in the water; it's very clear; fish are in it and I can see colors. I pushed a rock down and went deeper. I have a feeling of meeting my own essence - myself, then I came out of that and go up quickly in the air. When I got to my peak I spread out and encompassed the world.

The imagery in deep hypnosis had a very fluid and plastic quality. Subjects often described images transforming into other objects, people and animals. The imagery described was always very vivid

and very colorful. These qualities are demonstrated in some of the self-reports:

> I'm feeling my hands. They are turning into two roses in front of me in the darkness, making patterns about two feet in front of me.

> The dark in front of my eyes shakes every time my heart beats. It is like an earthquake, and all the images are falling down . . . then I see two streams of a thick, clear, red liquid streaming down.

Images of geometric shapes were described by seven subjects during the hypnosis sessions. The most common geometric shapes described were circles. Subjects described these shapes as follows:

> I see some half-circle lines on my vision. They appear and disappear like moon crescents. They are white and yellow.

> I am seeing little circles, yellow light with no pattern. They appear and disappear. There is a lighter area to the center of my vision and there are a bunch of stars like spokes on a wheel going out from the center. It looks like a star, a center and some arms. Just when I describe these things, they change. Now the center is dark.

Personal memories spontaneously emerged in eight of the ten hypnotic subjects. These personal memories usually (but not always) involved images of other people or animals. Images of people or animals were reported by nine of the hypnotic subjects. Subjects described spontaneous memories from both the recent past and from early childhood. The memories from early childhood usually had a strong emotional component to them. One subject described the following early memory in deep hypnosis.

> I'm three years old and I'm getting ready to go on stage to be the wind in Beauty and the Beast. I'm very nervous and I'm coloring backstage.

Different varieties of auditory hallucinations were experienced by seven of the subjects. Some of the subjects heard nursery rhymes which were sung to them by their mothers as children. Others heard the splashing of water; while still others heard just random musical tones. One of the subjects described this auditory experience as follows:

> I was listening to some music and I felt myself leave my body behind. I felt no sensations in my body. I just couldn't hear the music coming from any particular direction. It seemed to be coming from all around.

4. Transpersonal Experiences in Deep Hypnosis

Grof (1972) defines transpersonal experiences as involving an expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and the limitations of time and space. Approximately one-half hour after the onset of hypnosis, subjects began to report experiences involving a loosening of the usual ego boundaries. As subjects began to describe a loss of their body image, they felt that they were entering into a vast and infinite space. These experiences were universally reported as being very meaningful as well as unique for the subjects.

The first experience which occurred after subjects began to lose a sense of their body image was the feeling of being immersed in blackness. Eight of the ten subjects experienced this phenomenon. Subjects described this experience as follows:

> I'm looking around . . . I see darkness . . . an empty space . . . It feels directionless.

> I feel like my mind is just out in space with a big black universe behind it.

Immediately following this type of experience, subjects described sensations of floating in an infinite expanse without limits. This experience was a very new and novel one for all of the subjects. They described this infinite expanse as being filled with potentiality which was related to an awareness of the infinite spaces and possibilities within themselves. This realization gave many of the subjects a feeling of awe and wonder concerning the potential for their minds to transcend both the realm of normal secondary process thinking as well as the realm of altered bodily experiences. One verbatim description of this feeling gives a sense of what it was like for the subject:

> Everything is perfect; it's incredible. I don't seem to be able to grasp it all. I can't describe it well because it's fading into darkness very fast, but the darkness is very beautiful . . . there's nothing but darkness, there's nothing, but it's beautiful and strange and it makes me happy.

Following the above experience and at deeper reported levels of hypnosis, all subjects described feelings of oneness with the surrounding environment. After subjects experienced their body image becoming invisible and indistinct, the boundaries between themselves and the outside world began to vanish. One subject described this experience in the following self-report:

> I'm at one with the sounds outside, and they don't seem harsh to me, they feel a part of me. My body feels numb. I don't feel there is any distinction between my body and the mat I'm laying on.

The experience of oneness with the surroundings was associated with feelings of peacefulness and calmness by all of the subjects. One

subject reported these types of feelings in the following experience:

> It feels good to be able to merge with the sounds around me and the mat I'm laying on. It feels good to let my mind just sink and be blank. I feel less delineated.

Five subjects experienced some anxiety while in deep hypnosis. This anxiety was always related to fears of entering into unknown realms and fears of not knowing what kinds of experiences would transpire next. These fears were also centered around feelings of a loss of personal ego identity and could be likened to depersonalization experiences. One subject described his feelings of anxiety as follows:

> It's scary to go someplace I don't know anything about; fear about not knowing what is going on or touching a certain area. My mind feels so loose; it can go places where it would have no defenses.

The experience of complete blankness and emptiness of mind was experienced next by nine of the hypnotic subjects at a deeper reported depth. These experiences were described by the subjects as being very unusual in that no thoughts or images were going through their minds. The following accounts give a sense of what these experiences were like:

> I'm going into the void and losing consciousness.

> I'm not here. I'm out in this blackness; out in a timeless, spaceless place. Tangible things aren't here. Where I'm at it's like a third dimension. You normally see a table or something, but tables just don't exist here; tangible things don't exist. It's kind of weird.

> I'm experiencing just blackness; a void.
>
> Nothing is going through my mind. I'm immersed in blackness; my body feels dead . . . I was just feeling what it would feel like to be dead with nothing to worry about and nothing to be happy about . . . just nothing.

In very deep hypnosis, nine subjects described their experiences as giving them a sense of contacting a different reality. Subjects described this different reality as a place where they could obtain a different perspective on themselves and the world. Some of the following reports give a sense of what that experience was like for the subjects:

> My problems don't seem unsolvable; they seem very clear. . . I felt like this before. It's like psychedelics. Things seem like they are not difficult to get to. It's easier to get there and see things in a different light.
>
> It feels different; it feels strange and I like that feeling. It's exciting and adventuresome . . . I have a curiosity about that feeling and what kind of awareness that can open to me. I might learn a lot more about myself. I'm realizing a lot of energy that blocks myself from seeing other aspects of myself and feeling different things in different ways. I get an intuitive feeling that this is a way of finding out about other things in this world than my normal consciousness would allow me to know.

Experiences of contacting the self were reported by eight of the hypnotic subjects while in deep hypnosis. These experiences involved a feeling of complete self-acceptance. The following self-reports describe what this experience was like:

> I'm not experiencing anything; I'm at peace, like I've done everything right; total acceptance of myself and what I feel.
>
> I just had the sudden thought of being in tune with myself the way I am, or how it would be to be in tune with someone else, someday with someone I love just being with him. I had the feeling of experiencing this with someone else and what it would be like to be with someone, since I'm on a deep level now; someone that I have a deep feeling for. No one I know now, but someone I would want to know to experience a relationship on this level. I have a need. I would like to have a deep love for someone and he for me; someone I am yet to meet. Somehow I associate these feelings with love; a love that I never felt for anyone before . . . it's a very closeness, a very open kind with nothing to hide and nothing to be ashamed of, where your self is very in tune with the other person's self; just holding them; just a very deep emotional feeling; a deep contact.

Five of the subjects described feelings of awe and wonder during their deep hypnosis experiences. These feelings were often associated with being in touch with a force or power which was both infinite and timeless. Many of these subjects described these feelings as being 'religious.' An exemplary report of this type of experience was given by one of the subjects:

> I am in tune with such a different frequency . . . all of a sudden I've reached a higher state . . . now I'm on a higher level. Everyday thoughts and tangible things don't have as much meaning . . . It's a feeling of being at the gates of heaven. I feel like I have increased awareness, but not awareness of an everyday human sense. I f you could remember these kinds of feelings then all your problems would appear as meaningless.

Summary of the Phenomenological Results

The experiences which occurred during the beginning of the deep hypnosis sessions were qualitatively very different from the experiences which were reported later in the sessions. The first half-hour of the deep hypnosis sessions was, for the most part, focused upon alterations in the body image. After approximately one-half hour of being in deep hypnosis, the subjects reported a loss of their body image and a transcendence of both space and time. These experiences were described by many of the subjects as a transcendence of the ego. There were no differences found between the way in which deep hypnosis was experienced by male and female subjects. Both males and females went through the same progression of experiences in deep hypnosis, from the altered bodily and physical sensations which were experienced first in the sessions, to the transpersonal experiences which occurred later in the deep hypnosis sessions.

Time Spent in Deep Hypnosis

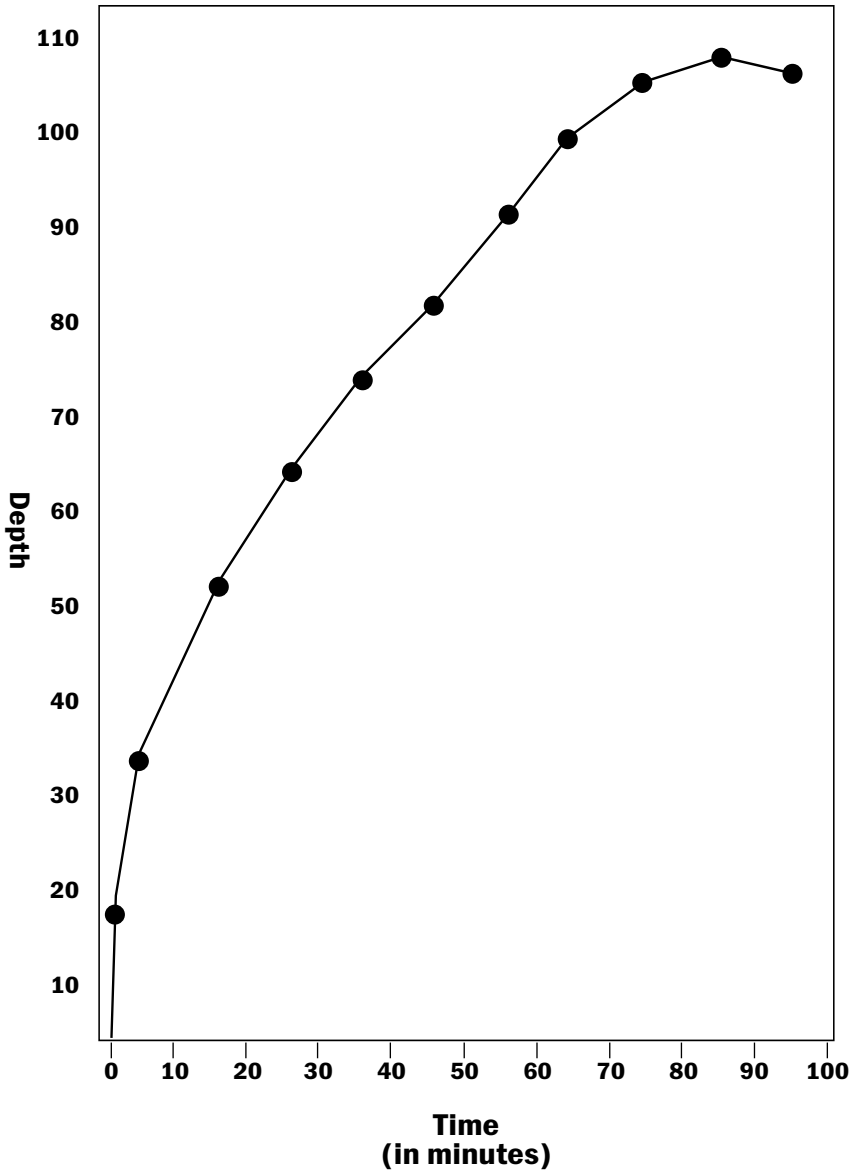
Subjects were told prior to being hypnotized that they would be allowed to stay in hypnosis for as long as they wished. Table 9 indicates the amount of time each subject remained in the hypnotic state during each of the deep hypnosis sessions, and also indicates the deepest reported depth attained during the two experimental sessions by each of the subjects. Figure 2 represents the relationship between mean reported depth and the amount of time spent in deep hypnosis. Reported depth increased as time spent in deep hypnosis increased. For both sessions the mean time that each subject remained in hypnosis was 65.45 minutes and the deepest reported mean depth was 88.3. For the first session the mean time spent in hypnosis was 70.4 minutes, and for the second session 60.5 minutes. The deepest reported mean depth for the first session was 80.5 and for the second session 96.1. Subjects appear to

have been able to go to deeper reported depths in a shorter amount of time in the second session as compared to the first deep hypnosis session.

Table 9
Amount of Time Spent in Deep Hypnosis and Deepest Reported Depth

Subject	Amount of Time In Hypnosis	Deepest Reported Depth	Amount of Time In Hypnosis	Deepest Reported Depth
	Session 1	Session 1	Session 2	Session 2
one	65	70	50	68
two	40	70	45	80
three	80	100	65	120
four	104	90	75	110
five	60	100	55	150
six	75	65	60	60
seven	60	50	65	70
eight	75	70	90	70
nine	80	100	55	130
ten	65	100	45	103
	mean=70.4 s.d.=14.68	mean=80.5 s.d.=21.73	mean=60.5 s.d.=60.5	mean=96.1 s.d.=29.29

FIGURE 2
The Relationship between Mean Reported Depth and Number of Minutes Spent in Deep Hypnosis



Post-session Inquiry

Subjects were able to describe in detail their experiences in the hypnotic sessions after the sessions actually occurred. There appeared to be little evidence of post-hypnotic amnesia. Subjects universally described that the vividness of the experience was very unique. Many subjects felt that their experiences with deep hypnosis enabled them to obtain a different perspective on their lives.

All of the subjects described the immersion in blackness, the experience of emptiness, and the oceanic feeling of oneness with their surroundings as being the experiences which coincided with their deepest achieved level of hypnosis. Subjects described these experiences after the session in the following manner:

> At my deepest level I stared into a giant darkness with no apparent ending, accompanied by feelings of awe resulting from the immensity and magnitude of the unending openness with no light.
>
> At my deepest level I had a feeling of oneness and non-resistance with myself and my surroundings; a general feeling of love and responsiveness to people and the world.
>
> At my deepest level of hypnosis I experienced great darkness. The darkness was a thing of beauty. I could not believe the blackness could be so beautiful.

The experience of nothingness and the void were entirely new experiences for all of the subjects, and they had a difficult time conceptualizing the meaning of these experiences. They all sensed that they had reached a very profound level of awareness, but still it was a level they were not equipped to integrate into their daily lives.

Many of the subjects described feeling very close to the hypnotist/experimenter after the sessions were over. Several of the subjects reported internalizing the image of their hypnotist into their hypnotic experiences. All subjects described the hypnotist as being a link to reality during the sessions and an important anchor for them while they were in deep hypnosis.

Personality and Deep Hypnosis Experience

Correlations were calculated between scores on the different personality measures used and total scores of the Linton-Langs Subjective Experience Questionnaire given during the three experimental conditions (Table 10). Change scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire between the awake state and the two deep hypnosis conditions were also correlated with the different personality measures (Table 11).

Table 10
Correlations Between Personality Test Scores and Scores on the Total Linton-Langs Questionnaire Given in the Awake State and During the Two Deep Hypnosis Sessions

Personality Test	Linton-Langs Awake	p	Linton-Langs Hypnosis Session 1	p	Linton-Langs Hypnosis Session 2	p
Rorschach F+%	-0.15	n.s.	-0.1	n.s.	-0.16	n.s.
Rorschach Movement (M)	0.31	n.s.	-0.1	n.s.	-0.53	n.s.
Barron Ego-Strength	0.53	n.s.	-0.32	n.s.	-0.05	n.s.
Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory	0.28	n.s.	-0.35	n.s.	-0.16	n.s.
Myers-Briggs Introversion-Extroversion	0.41	n.s.	0.18	n.s.	-0.34	n.s.

Myers-Briggs Intuition-Sensation	**-0.22**	**n.s.**	**-0.31**	**n.s.**	**0.08**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Feeling-Thinking	**0.26**	**n.s.**	**0.23**	**n.s.**	**0.04**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Perception-Judgement	**0.06**	**n.s.**	**-0.64**	**P<.05**	**-0.13**	**n.s.**

Table 11
Correlations Between Personality Test Scores and Change Scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire (awake scores minus hypnosis session 1 scores and awake scores minus hypnosis session 2 scores)

Personality Test	Awake State L-L minus session 1 L-L	p	Awake State L-L minus session 2 L-L	p
Rorschach F+%	**0.01**	**n.s.**	**-0.03**	**n.s.**
Rorschach Movement (M)	**0.37**	**n.s.**	**0.52**	**n.s.**
Barron Ego-Strength	**-0.22**	**n.s.**	**-0.36**	**n.s.**
Fitzgerald Openness to Experience Inventory	**0.55**	**n.s.**	**0.29**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Introversion-Extroversion	**0.23**	**n.s.**	**0.49**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Intuition-Sensation	**0.07**	**n.s.**	**-0.2**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Feeling-Thinking	**0.04**	**n.s.**	**0.17**	**n.s.**
Myers-Briggs Perception-Judgement	**0.06**	**n.s.**	**0.11**	**n.s.**

Few significant correlations were found between scores on the personality measures used and scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire given during the three experimental conditions. No significant correlations were found between scores on the personality measures and change scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. One reason for the lack of significant correlations in Tables 10 and 11 is that the sample size (n=10) was rather small. However, another possible conclusion is that there is not a strong relationship between experiences in deep hypnosis and pre-existing personality dimensions. The effect of the deep hypnosis technique could be so strong as to mitigate against a differential reaction to it based on personality measures gained in an awake state.

The meaning of the one significant negative correlation on the perception-judgment dimension of the Myers-Briggs Indicator and total scores on the Linton-Langs Questionnaire from the first deep hypnosis session is that a preference for judgment is related to the experience of a large quantity of altered state phenomena in hypnosis. Myers (1962) described the judging attitude as a way of coming to conclusions about one's experience. In the judging attitude, in order to come to a conclusion, perception and open-mindedness must be shut off for the time being. This would indicate a lack of openness to experience. These results are counter to the experimental hypothesis that 'perception' and openness to experience would be related to the experience of a wide range of altered state phenomena.

One interesting observation is that most of the correlations were negative when Linton-Langs deep hypnosis scores were correlated with different personality dimensions. This trend indicates that subjects who were high on Rorschach Movement, who were introverted and who were high on measures of ego-strength appear to experience less altered state phenomena that those subjects who were extraverted, low in Rorschach movement and who had less

ego-strength. These results could point to the conclusion that subjects who were less in touch with their inner lives in an awake state, and who had low ego-strength (as compared to the other subjects) experienced hypnosis as being more different from their waking state of awareness than subjects who scored higher on these measures. Subjects scoring lower on the above mentioned measures actually experienced more altered state phenomena than those subjects who were more in touch with their inner lives in an awake state and who had greater ego-strength. Conclusions from this area of the study are limited due to the homogeneity of the subject population and the small sample size (n=10).

SECTION IV
DISCUSSION

Summary of Research Findings

The phenomenological part of this research followed largely exploratory and descriptive lines. An attempt was made to map out the subjective experiences which were reported by subjects during two sessions of deep hypnosis. It was found that subjects experienced a wide variety of different phenomena while hypnotized. During the first half hour of the deep hypnosis sessions, subjects experienced marked changes in the perception of their bodies. Subjects first reported feeling heavier, then smaller, and finally reported that their bodies were changing into a fluid substance and melting into the cushion upon which they were being hypnotized. After one-half hour of being in deep hypnosis, subjects reported experiencing a sense of oneness with their surroundings, that they had no thoughts or images in their minds, and that they felt as if they were in a "different reality." The results from the Linton-Langs Questionnaire indicated that in deep hypnosis, subjects experienced disturbances in concentration, attention and memory, and that time was perceived as being different from the way in which it was perceived in an awake state.

Subjects reported that while in deep hypnosis, time had lost significance for them. While subjects felt that at times they were losing control over their emotions, they also felt that they were gaining new insights into themselves. The Linton-Langs Questionnaire revealed that subjects, while in deep hypnosis, experienced marked changes in their body image along with such somatic symptoms as dizziness, numbness, nausea and weakness. These subjective changes in hypnosis represent a fundamental discontinuity from the non-hypnotic state. This was confirmed by the comparison of Linton-Langs scores obtained during the awake state and during the two deep hypnosis conditions.

The general hypotheses underlying the personological part of the present study were that that subjects who scored highly on measures of ego-strength and on measures of contact with their inner lives would experience a large variety and large quantity of altered state phenomena while in deep hypnosis as measured by the Linton-Langs Questionnaire. These hypotheses were not proved correct in this study and in fact measures of ego-strength and contact with intrapsychic fantasy were negatively (although not significantly) correlated with the quantity of altered state phenomena experienced in deep hypnosis.

Methodological Issues

The set and setting of the experiment were variables which had a great deal of influence on the responses of the subjects while in deep hypnosis. The non-authoritarian, relaxed atmosphere, plus the empathic concern of the experimenter towards each subject were key factors which facilitated the deep hypnosis experience. The experimenter was supportive, but non-directive in his approach towards the subjects. He did not give the subjects suggestions to experience anything at all during the sessions, but merely asked the subjects what they were experiencing at five minute intervals. His open and trust-

ing attitude gave subjects a sense of security during the experiment and this enabled the subjects to explore aspects of their awareness which were previously unexplored.

There are some limitations to the research methodology which qualify the generalizations that can be made from it. First, and most apparent, the study is confined to a small (n=10) group of well-functioning University of California-Berkeley undergraduate students who do not exhibit any major forms of psychopathology, and who are both highly susceptible to, and well-trained in, hypnosis. Although one important consequence of the small sample size is the distinct likelihood that an unknown number of patterns of reactions to deep hypnosis may exist with different subject populations, research carried out by Ludwig and Levine (1965) with a clinical population yielded similar results to those reported in this study. Their study also utilized the Linton-Langs Questionnaire to study alterations of consciousness in hypnosis and involved a post-drug addict population. The subjects were patients in psychiatric treatment at a state hospital. Although no personality data were reported on these subjects, all subjects were recommended for psychotherapy and therefore this population can be considered to possess a greater degree of psychopathology than subjects in this study. Ludwig and Levine noted that subjects in hypnosis reported experiencing a strong sense of unreality, differences in external perception, a feeling of melting or merging into their surroundings, blank minds, strange bodily sensations, loss of control over themselves, and feelings of being controlled by others. Subjects in this study reported all of the same phenomena except feelings that they were being controlled by others. This difference could be due to the greater degree of ego-strength and ego autonomy in the subjects in this study which contributed to a sense of their being in control of what was happening to them. This sense of control was reflected in a feeling of being able to terminate the hypnosis session whenever they wanted to.

This element of reversibility is an important one and the results of this study show that subjects who score highly on measures of ego-strength are able to terminate the deep hypnosis experience when they desire to do so. All subjects in this study scored highly on Barron's Ego-Strength Scale when compared to clinical populations (Barron, 1953), and all the subjects were able to terminate the deep hypnosis sessions when they so desired. One could speculate that in a group of clinical subjects, such as psychotics, the lack of ego-strength would cause them to feel overwhelmed by anxiety because of the uncontrolled intrusion of primary process material. Their use of projective defense mechanisms would also make them feel that they were being controlled by others and could lead to paranoid ideation. For these reasons, the deep hypnosis technique should not be used with subjects who do not score highly on measures of ego-strength. Even though from a scientific standpoint it would be interesting to utilize this technique with low ego-strength subjects, it would be unethical since it could precipitate the emergence of psychotic thought processes.

An Explanation of the Phenomenology of Deep Hypnosis

Some of the most striking and novel results of the present research were the reported experiences of distortions in the body image which occurred during the first half-hour of the deep hypnosis sessions and the reported experiences of feelings of oneness with the surroundings, feelings of peacefulness and calmness, feelings of being in a "different reality," and feelings of not being confined to one's body which occurred one-half hour after induction into deep hypnosis. These two distinct classes of experience occurred with regularity during the deep hypnosis sessions. Body image distortions always preceded experiences of an extension of the usual boundaries of ego awareness and feelings of being in a "different reality."

During the beginning of the deep hypnosis sessions, body image distortions were reported by all of the subjects. Subjects reported first that parts of their bodies became both smaller and larger than usual. Later, subjects reported that the actual substance of their body was changing and that it felt as if it were melting into the floor. The altered body experiences which transpired during deep hypnosis can be viewed as metaphors for the alterations in ego boundaries which occurred shortly after the induction into the hypnotic state.

The body image concept has for a long time been of interest to psychologists. Freud (1923) saw in the concept of the body image a means of describing how the initially undifferentiated organism develops an organized structure. He believed that the ego was primarily a body ego, and that the evolution of ego awareness was intimately related to bodily sensations. According to psychoanalytic theory, the earliest ego development takes place in terms of the child's learning to integrate sensations from the body surface. The child uses these sensations as a basis for discriminating between the outer world and his own body. Thus, the body image is basic to the development of the total ego structure as well as being a nucleus for later ego development.

Gil and Brenman (1959) noted that the intense body image sensations of the individual being hypnotized mirror changes in ego boundaries which are correlated with entering into a hypnotic state. Thus, the major changes in the individual's way of organizing the world while in deep hypnosis were accompanied by marked alterations in the way he experienced his body. Body image changes are a result of the hypnotic subject's voluntary abdication of one of the major modalities by which he defines reality, namely his body image and body ego.

Changes in the body image in altered states of consciousness have been noted by many researchers in the field. Linton, Langs, Holt, Goldberger and Klein (1972) found that subjects under the influence of LSD experienced marked distortions of the body image which included changes in size, shape, weight and proportion. These types of body image changes were also experienced by subjects in the present research. In the LSD research conducted by Linton, et. al., LSD subjects experienced a loss of control over their bodies which included feelings of dizziness, weakness, and lightness. Subjects in the LSD study also experienced feelings that parts of their bodies did not belong to them or were disconnected. All of these phenomena were experienced by the hypnotic subjects in this study, and point to a possible underlying similarity between the LSD state and the deep hypnotic state. Further similarities between LSD and deep hypnosis can be seen when looking at the research of Masters and Houston (1966). Masters and Houston found that subjects who had ingested LSD reported that the surface of their body felt mildly anesthetized and that their flesh felt as if it were becoming rubbery. Many of the hypnotic subjects in the present study experienced similar phenomena. Several hours after the ingestion of LSD, Masters' and Houston's subjects reported the experience of a gradual dissolution of body boundaries and a sense of having no body. This same progression of phenomena was experienced by subjects in deep hypnosis.

Body image changes have also been noted while subjects have been in sensory deprivation environments. Zubeck (1969) reported that some subjects in sensory deprivation environments experience "out of the body" type experiences and also report marked distortions in their body image.

The similarities between the altered body image experiences reported by subjects in LSD, sensory deprivation and deep hypnosis research points to a common underlying response to altered

states of consciousness. These similarities could be due to a common symbolic representation (the body image) of changes in ego awareness which occur in altered states of consciousness. This finding leads to the hypothesis that alterations in consciousness are first experienced as distortions in the body image and body ego. It also points to the conclusion that the body image is one of the major modalities by which reality is defined.

In the "normal" awake state of consciousness, the individual experiences himself as existing within the boundaries of his physical body, and his perception of the environment is restricted by the physically determined range of his sensory organs. In an awake state both his internal perception and his perception of the environment are confined within the usual space-time boundaries. In deep hypnosis these perceptions undergo radical alterations. One-half hour after induction into deep hypnosis, subjects began to report changes in their 'usual' state of consciousness which involved an expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and the limitations of time and space. Grof (1972) has defined these unusual changes in consciousness as transpersonal experiences. In deep hypnosis these experiences included feelings of floating in an infinite expanse, feelings of oneness with the surroundings, feelings of awe and wonder, and the experience of having no thoughts or images in one's mind.

Emerging research in transpersonal psychology and altered states of consciousness (Grof, 1970; Tart, 1969) offers many valuable hypotheses for the understanding of these experiences reported by subjects in deep hypnosis. Some of the most important discoveries by these researchers have resulted in a mapping or ordering of different states of consciousness. The research of Grof (1970), who has utilized LSD for psychotherapeutic purposes, offers some interesting parallels to the deep hypnosis experience. Many of the transpersonal experiences which were reported by subjects while

in deep hypnosis are strikingly similar to what Grof describes in his LSD research as Basic Perinatal Matrices. These matrices are experiences which are related to biological birth and are often accompanied by images of embryos, fetuses, newborn children and neonatal feelings. They are related to concrete experiences of the individual states of biological birth and are also associated with intrauterine experiences before the onset of delivery when the child and mother form a symbiotic unit. These experiences are characterized by peaceful feelings which are beyond space and time. There is a felt satisfaction of all needs which is experienced as a union with love and creativity. The undisturbed uterine experiences are the deepest model for ecstatic, mystical and religious experiences of unity where the subject-object dichotomy is transcended. Grof (1972) describes this as a Nirvana type of ecstasy which is made up of highly positive emotions, the melting of boundaries between subject and object and the transcendence of time and space.

The experiences which have been described by Grof as having a prenatal origin relate in very significant ways to the experiences of subjects in the present research. In deep hypnosis, subjects experienced a sense of oneness with the surrounding environment, had feelings of extreme peacefulness, calmness, joy and happiness, experienced no thoughts or images, and experienced 'religious' types of feelings. Perinatal imagery was very common during the deep hypnosis sessions. Many of the subjects described descending down tunnels which were moist and secretive. At the end of these tunnels the subjects also described viewing clear pools of water. One subject in deep hypnosis described a small 'creature' with small arms and legs which had a striking similarity to a fetus. He described this creature as "a good friend, a mother." This imagery could be related to an embryonic experience of the fetus in the mother's womb.

Grof's LSD subjects also reported experiences of the void (Grof, 1973), which he describes as follows:

> Occasionally the subjects reported the experience of the Void, the ultimate metacosmic and supracosmic nothingness . . . Such an experience involves transcendence of our concept of causality; it does not involve the disqualifying feeling of absurdity that we would experience in the usual state of consciousness while considering the possibility of something happening without a precedent or a consequence as well as something originating out of nothingness or disappearing into the nothingness. The Void could also be experienced as just another aspect of the Universal Mind; in that case emptiness appeared to be identical with form, and form with emptiness - they are just different aspects of the same dimension (p. 12).

When subjects in deep hypnosis described experiences of nothingness, emptiness, and the void, they also reported that their concepts of space, time and finitude had undergone radical alterations. All subjects who experienced emptiness and what could be termed the void felt that it was the most profound experience of deep hypnosis and also the most difficult to understand.

The transpersonal experiences of deep hypnosis can also be related to work done by Pahnke and Richards (1966) on LSD and experimental mysticism. Many of the categories of experience they described in their work with LSD also are closely related to experiences described by subjects in this study. Experiences of an undifferentiated unity and a sense of oneness with the surroundings were reported by both subjects under the influence of LSD and by subjects in the present study. Subjects in both studies experienced insightful knowledge about existence in general which was felt at an intuitive, non-rational level. Subjects under LSD and in deep hypnosis experienced a transcendence of space and time.

Space and time in both conditions became generally meaningless concepts.

Aaronson (1968) has found some analogies between the hypnotic state and the psychedelic state. Using suggestions of alterations in time, particularly of the expanded present, subjects have reported feelings of being in a boundless, luminous present which Aaronson related to mystical experience. With suggestions of expanding depth, Aaronson (1965) found that psychedelic-type experiences were reported which included subjective reports of 'feeling the hand of God manifest in an ordered world.' Subjects also experienced a profound involvement in the experimental task and experienced an expansion of the boundaries of the self. These experiences are similar to those reported by subjects in this study, but Aaronson does not report an ordering of experience in hypnosis. Also Aaronson's results are not conclusive since all of his studies involve just one subject. The findings of the present study offer more substantive evidence of the similarities between hypnosis and the psychedelic state.

One hypothesis which might explain the similarities between psychedelic states induced by LSD and deep hypnosis is that both deep hypnosis and LSD appear to amplify internal psychological processes and enable an unfolding of various levels of previously unconscious psychological processes. The similarities between the reported experiences of LSD subjects and subjects in deep hypnosis are very striking. This similarity of experience could also be due to a basic similarity in response to altered states of consciousness. Both LSD and deep hypnosis enable a person to focus his attention in a very intensive manner upon his internal psychological processes. This intensive focusing appears to result in similar types of experiences which could point to an underlying structure in the human psyche. This structure can be characterized as involving first, body imagery; second, perinatal experiences; and

finally, transpersonal experiences of an expansion of ego boundaries and the experience of a timeless, spaceless void. The consistent ordering of these experiences in the reports of subjects in deep hypnosis and subjects who are given LSD offers some evidence of this regular ordering of phenomenological experience. The body imagery appears to be related to changes in ego boundaries and the perinatal imagery appears to signal the complete loss of ego boundaries which is described as a feeling of oneness with the environment.

The changes in consciousness produced by deep hypnosis can be seen as a structural regression of the ego. The ego in deep hypnosis appears to undergo fundamental changes in its mode of perception of external and internal phenomena. In deep hypnosis, phenomena perceived as coming from within the subject are viewed as the 'only' reality. As subjects reported going more deeply into hypnosis, external sounds were perceived as being less and less distinct. The experience of oneness with the surroundings reported in very deep hypnosis represents a complete abdication of the differentiating aspects of ego functioning. Subjects reported losing their awareness of themselves as separate individuals and described experiencing an undifferentiated awareness in which there was no distinguishing boundary between themselves and the outer world.

The altered state phenomena which occur in deep hypnosis represent a change in the use of attention and a progressive shift of perceptual and cognitive organization from an analytic, abstract, intellectual mode which is typical of waking secondary process thought to a less differentiated type of thought which is characterized by vivid imagery. As attention becomes more focused on intrapsychic processes, an eventual de-differentiation with respect to the distinctions between the self and the outer world occurs. Experiences of unity with the outer environment represent a level of differentiation that merges all boundaries until the self is no

longer experienced as a separate object and customary perceptual and cognitive distinctions are no longer applicable.

This type of blurring of ego boundaries is also prevalent in psychotic states, but in subjects who possess adequate ego-strength the regression can be viewed as a function of a flexible ego which is able to regress safely and voluntarily. The subjects in this study reported that the phenomena they experienced had a great deal of meaning for them, which points to the adaptive aspect of this regressive process. It was an experience which enabled them to explore their own subjectivity and which provided them with glimpses into the workings of their internal psychological processes.

Implications for Psychotherapy

The experiences which have been reported by subjects in this study while in deep hypnosis have important implications for psychotherapy. Especially relevant for psychotherapy would be the experience of contacting the self which subjects described as having a great deal of meaning for them. The experience of contacting the self was reported as involving feelings of total self-acceptance and feelings of having contacted a conflict-free core of the personality. This encounter with the self could provide a therapeutic experience which would allow a person to change a negative self-image into a more accepting and tolerant self-image. The self-image can be viewed as a unified pattern of feeling and behavior. It has been likened to the input signal of a feedback control system; the personality and behavior-pattern structure tend to 'follow' the self-image (Harmon, 1967). A positive change in the self-image would then have consequences on behaviors and actions as well as upon one's view of oneself. These changes would have an impact upon interpersonal relationships as well as upon the use of defenses and resistances. A positive change in self-image would move a person away from resistiveness and defensiveness and toward an increas-

ing awareness of his deeper needs, toward growing confidence in his own inner reactions as a trustworthy guide to behavior, toward increasing sensitivity and openness to experience with increased ability to form new relationships, and toward being in accord with himself.

The importance of the use of hypnotic imagery in psychotherapy has been explored by Singer (1971). Singer (1971, p. 1) stated that "man's private picture-making capacity, his stream of consciousness and internal monologues, so central to the psychology of the turn of the century have only been rediscovered in the past decade as subjects for scientific scrutiny or clinical application after fifty years of relative neglect." Singer also noted that the use of hypnotic techniques in psychotherapy could have important implications for personality change. He maintained that the use of hypnosis in psychotherapy permits a more flexible use of imagery and the patient can more readily entertain an alternative positive self-image in the face of well-established negative memories and fantasies.

Naranjo (1970) noted that most of psychotherapy consists of variations upon the underlying motif of the liberation of man's organismic tendencies from the prison of his conditioning. This involves the de-structuring of individual behavior in order to facilitate the emergence of one's inner self. The altered state of consciousness produced by deep hypnosis causes a state of temporary unlearning of perceptual or social stereotypes which enables an individual to potentially become more receptive to his unconditioned or true needs and reactions. The psychological process of change and growth also involves the concept of the de-automization of outmoded perceptual systems. The process of de-automization in psychotherapy is an important one. In the de-automization process "pragmatic systems of automatic selection are set aside or break down in favor of alternate modes of consciousness whose stimulus processing may be less efficient from a biological point of view but whose very

inefficiency may permit the experience of aspects of the real world formerly excluded or ignored" (Deikman, 1966, p. 43). De-automization involves an undoing of old structures of perception and cognition which can be followed by an advance or retreat in level of ego organization. The deep hypnosis technique promotes a temporary regression in ego functioning. An advance in ego functioning would occur if the contents of the regression were assimilated by the ego in an awake state. The deep hypnosis experience, by allowing new perceptions of self to emerge into awareness, could produce positive personality changes. The experiences which occur in deep hypnosis must be integrated into ego consciousness in order for changes in self perception to last beyond the initial experience. This integration and assimilation of new psychological material into conscious awareness occurs through a cognitive and emotional understanding of the experience. A skilled psychotherapist would be needed to help in this integration process. Experiences in deep hypnosis which are not integrated into the existing ego structure would remain detached and ego-alien, and would not cause personality change. An important area of research following from these observations would be to study the long range effects of deep hypnosis upon personality in the context of psychotherapy. This type of study would entail using the deep hypnosis technique over a long period of time. Before and after treatment measures of a wide range of personality functions would be needed to measure the effects of this mode of treatment.

Deep hypnosis bears many similarities to Jung's active imagination technique in which the patient is told to focus upon his internal imagery without controlling his responses. Deep hypnosis could be used as an adjunct to Jungian-oriented analytic psychotherapy. According to Jung, the road to psychological health is through the integration of the contents of the unconscious psyche. The unconscious psyche for Jung comprises all of the inner psychological processes which can be subsumed under the category of images and symbols. The symbols and images which the unconscious psyche

produces provide the keys for the growth and development of the personality. Jung believed that there exists in the unconscious psyche a natural centering process whereby images and symbols spontaneously start to revolve around a central axis, which he termed the self (Jung, 1959). This process Jung has termed individuation. It is a process of finding the center of the personality and then integrating the contents of the unconscious around its center. The individuation process involves a progressive integration of unconscious contents that leads to a continuously growing synthesis between the ego and the unconscious with the self as the central point between the two systems. Deep hypnosis could provide an individual with an experience of the self, as well as provide access to the necessary inner imagery which would be needed for psychological growth to occur.

The use of hypnotic imagery in psychotherapy has also been studied by Leuner (1969). Leuner has found that the use of hypnotic imagery in psychotherapy can help to relieve acute neurotic disturbances by providing a corrective emotional experience on a symbolic level. Leuner has not found that the use of hypnotic imagery is useful with psychotics or drug addicts who do not have the adequate ego-strength needed to integrate the experience.

Deep hypnosis could also have implications for the psychotherapeutic treatment of death anxiety. Richards, Grof, Goodman and Kurland (1972) have found that dramatic therapeutic changes in dying patients followed LSD psychotherapy sessions in which the patient described feelings of unity with the surroundings, feelings of having transcended time and space, feelings of sacredness, awe and wonder, and feelings of extreme happiness. Terminal cancer patients who described these experiences were often those who seemed most completely free of a fear of death following their sessions. Deep hypnosis could provide dying patients with many of the same experiences which were elicited by the use of LSD. Deep hypnosis is a technique which has not been tried with dying patients and due to the phenom-

enological similarities between LSD and deep hypnosis it could be a very useful adjunct in the treatment of death anxiety in the terminally ill. The deep hypnosis technique would be a better method to use than LSD with dying patients because the drug-induced state is highly uncontrolled and the experience could be contaminated by various chemical side effects. Deep hypnosis provides a controlled (by both hypnotist and subject) technique for entering into altered states of consciousness and the experience can be terminated when desired if there is a negative reaction.

Phenomena Experienced in Deep Hypnosis and Personality Assessment

The general hypothesis underlying the personological part of this study was that personality variables such as ego-strength, openness to experience, and degree of contact with the 'inner life' would be related to subjective experiences in deep hypnosis. It was found that these variables were not significantly correlated with experiences in deep hypnosis. The findings of this part of the study which were contrary to the original hypotheses must be viewed with the homogeneity and small size of the subject population in mind. The phenomenological results of this study are applicable to a select group of subjects who possess qualities of high ego-strength and who are in touch with their inner lives. The subjects in this study were all well-functioning young adults who have a sense of security in themselves and the world around them. It is precisely these aspects of their personality functioning which enabled them to go very deeply into hypnosis without experiencing extreme anxiety or feelings of being overwhelmed by irrational experience. The fact that there were so few significant correlations in the data between personality variables and deep hypnosis experience is probably related to the homogeneity and small size of the subject population. A much larger subject population of well-functioning young adults would be needed to corroborate the findings that personality variables are

not significantly related to experience in deep hypnosis. With the limitations of the subject population in mind, it is also possible to speculate that there may be no relationship between personality traits measured in an awake state and experience in deep hypnosis. The effect of the deep hypnosis technique could be powerful enough to mitigate against measurable differences in experiential response. This could be understood in the framework of ego functions. Ego functions of perception and cognition undergo radical alterations in deep hypnosis which lead to a de-differentiation of ego boundaries. This de-differentiation of ego boundaries between the self and the outer world is fundamentally different from ego functioning in the awake state where there is a clear differentiation between self and outer world. This significant difference in ego functioning could explain why personality traits measured in a waking state do not correlate significantly with experiences in deep hypnosis. Ego functioning in deep hypnosis is fundamentally different from ego functioning in an awake state; and the personality traits which were measured in an awake state would not necessarily carry over to a state in which the ego is structurally de-differentiated.

Other avenues for future research into the interaction of personality dynamics and deep hypnosis experience would be the use of the deep hypnosis technique with different subject populations. One such subject population would be creative individuals such as writers and artists. This group of individuals utilizes the imagination and fantasy productions in their daily work and they are in a constant dialogue with these psychological processes. It would be important to see if such individuals would have more elaborate imagery while in deep hypnosis and also if their use of language while in deep hypnosis would be different from the undergraduate students used in the present study who are not skilled in the use of fantasy material for creative purposes. Poets and writers would probably be able to describe more vividly than the subjects

in this study the nature and content of their experiences in deep hypnosis. Using this type of subject population, a clearer delineation of the different altered states of consciousness which occur in deep hypnosis would be possible. The use of the deep hypnosis technique with a group of creative artists could also offer information on the nature of the creative process. This type of study would entail an analysis of subjective experiences these subjects have while in deep hypnosis followed by an analysis of the artistic productions these individuals would be asked to create after their experience. One could speculate that creative individuals would be able to translate their experiences in deep hypnosis into some form of creative expression, be it a poem, painting, or sculpture. The study of this translation of internal experience into external expression would offer a vehicle for studying the creative process. This type of study would also offer data to operationally test Kris' (1952) theory of regression in the service of the ego which he believed is the hallmark of the creative process. Kris delineated two distinct phases in the process of regression in the service of the ego: the inspirational phase and the elaborational phase. The inspirational phase involves the surging into awareness of previously unconscious and preconscious contents. The elaborational phase involves the reorganization into secondary process language of the material produced in the inspirational phase. Deep hypnosis has many similarities to Kris' inspirational phase of the creative process of regression in the service of the ego. In deep hypnosis, fantasy material is readily accessible and the subject is made aware of previously unconscious psychological material. If the creative artist were asked to elaborate and describe in some manner such as painting, poetry or prose his experience in deep hypnosis, it would be possible to look at both the inspirational and elaborational phases of the creative process. Such a study has not been carried out utilizing deep hypnosis and it could prove to be an important area of future research.

Conclusion

The findings of this research point to the need of a new conceptualization of the phenomenology of hypnosis which takes into account changes in ego structure from a differentiated to a de-differentiated state. The most advanced view so far developed to understand altered states of consciousness has been developed by traditional Eastern psychology. But the language used by these approaches are, for the most part, incomprehensible to the Western psychologist. The traditional Eastern approaches to the study of consciousness, such as Zen Buddhism, offer many parallels to the deep hypnosis experience. The experiences of deep hypnosis such as feelings of unity with the surroundings, the cessation of mental activity, and loss of knowledge of individual identity are phenomenologically similar to the Zen Buddhist state of satori which has been described as a state in which there are no thoughts or images and there is a sense of oneness with the world (Maupin, 1965). The use of deep hypnosis in a controlled setting could help in understanding the complex literature of Eastern psychology which has much to offer in our understanding of intrapsychic processes. Spiegelberg (1964) has noted that in Sanskrit there are twenty terms used to differentiate states of consciousness; in English there is only a single distinction between the conscious and the unconscious. Western psychology needs to construct a more adequate map of altered states of consciousness and the deep hypnosis could be utilized to construct such a map. The results of this research offer the beginnings of such a structural map of altered states of consciousness.

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Appendix A
Materials

[**Editor's note**: Spaces for answers in the original questionnaire have been deleted here.]

All Information Will be Strictly Confidential

- Could you describe briefly your attitude towards altered states of consciousness, i.e., meditation, hypnosis, marijuana, psychedelics, yoga, etc.

- Could you describe what your experiences have been with altered states. Have you ever meditated, used marijuana, practiced yoga or used psychedelics? If you have, could you list frequency and length of time or practice or use.

- What are your expectations for deep hypnosis? What do you think will happen? Where do your expectations come from?

Session 1 & 2:

- Please describe as fully as possible your experiences during this session of deep hypnosis. Describe as fully as you can those experiences which occurred at light, medium, and deep levels.

- What was your deepest level of hypnosis during this session? (0-100 or beyond)

- What did you experience at your deepest achieved level of hypnosis?

- What unique thing or things happened to you during the hypnosis session? What was the most unique experience?

- Could you describe how you felt about your experience of deep hypnosis during this session? What kind of meaning did it have for you?

- How did you feel when you came out of hypnosis?

Tired									Alert
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- How did you feel about the experimenter-hypnotist? How comfortable did you feel with him?

- Is there anything which you would have liked the experimenter-hypnotist to do that he did not do during the session?

Session 2:

- How would you describe the second deep hypnosis session as being different from the first?

Linton-Langs Questionnaire

Name Session

Subjective Experience Questionnaire

Yes	No	
		1. Have things felt unreal, as if you were in a dream?
		2. Do I look different than I usually do?
		3. Have objects or the things about you looked different in any way?
		4. Do you find yourself talking about personal things you wouldn't usually talk about?
		5. Have you felt somehow as if you were melting or merging into your surroundings?
		6. Have you been thinking or talking a lot about your childhood?
		7. Have you felt occasionally that you have lost your sense of time?
		8a. Have you felt that you have lost control over yourself?
		If not:
		8b. Have you felt that you might?
		9a. Have you found it difficult to move?
		9b. Easier than usual? (to move)
		10. Have you found it hard to concentrate on the tasks being given you?
		11. Have you felt that certain things were especially clear to you or that you understood them better?
		12. Have you seen new connections between certain events or experiences that you had not seen before?
		13. Have you felt depressed or sad?
		14. Has your body looked or felt strange in any way?
		If so, how?

		15. Have you been especially happy?
		16a. Have you been feeling silly?
		16b. Have you been acting silly?
		17. Have you been thinking about things you don't usually think about?
		18. Have you felt like a child?
		19. Have events or experiences seemed illogical or disconnected?
		20. Have you felt that under hypnosis you have acquired any new power or ability?
		21a. Has time been passing faster than usual?
		21b. Has it been passing slower than usual?
		22. Have some things seemed meaningless to you?
		23. Have you felt as if you were standing aside and watching yourself?
		24. Have you felt like an old person?
		25. Has any particular thing fascinated you -- held your attention so that you found it hard to leave it?
		26. Has it felt as if some part of your body was disconnected or somehow didn't belong to the rest of your body?
		27. Have you been afraid or upset?
		28. Have you lost control of your thoughts?
If so:		
		28a. Have your thoughts taken possession of you?
		28b. Does it feel as if someone else is controlling them?
		29a. Have you felt you would rather not talk?
		29b. Have you found it hard to talk?
		29c. Have you been talking more than usual?
		30. Has it felt that time has come to a standstill or stopped now and then?
		31. Have certain objects or other things taken on meanings they never had before?

		32a. At times have your thoughts been moving faster than usual?
		32b. At times have your thoughts been moving slower than usual?
		33. Have you felt angry or annoyed?
		(Angry or annoyed at self)
		(Anger or annoyance directed externally)
		34. Have you felt at times that you have lost control over your body or that you might?
		If so:
		34a. As if someone or something else has taken over?
		35. Do you think that your judgment and ability to evaluate have been different from usual?
		If so, how
		36. Is it hard to hold onto thoughts, ideas, or images -- do they seem to get away from you when you try to catch them?
		37. Have you felt like a different person at times?
		38. Have you felt that you were withdrawing from reality or losing your hold on the real world?
		39. Has your mind been a blank at times, so that you have had no thoughts at all?
		40. Have you been at all afraid that you might go crazy or lose your mind?
		41. Have you lost control over your emotions and feelings?
		If so:
		41a. Have they taken possession of you?
		41b. Does it feel as if someone else is controlling them?
		42. Have you been seeing imaginary things?
		43. Have you felt as if some of what you have been doing is not really your doing at all?
		44. Does one idea, thought, or image keep coming back again and again?
		45. Are you unsure of how I am responding or reacting to you?

		46. Have you had any of the following physical sensations?
		a. Dizziness or grogginess?
		b. Numbness or tingling?
		c. Chills or a cold feeling?
		d. Felt hot or sweating?
		e. Funny taste in your mouth?
		f. Unusual or heightened smells or odors?
		g. Felt nauseous?
		h. Blurred vision or trouble focusing your vision?
		i. Mouth dry or less saliva than usual?
		j. Pressure or ringing in ears?
		k. Felt weak physically?
		l. Body felt lighter or like it was floating in space?
		m. Body felt heavier?
		47. Do you find that while you are answering a question you tend to forget what the question was?

APPENDIX B

[**Editor's note:** The tables in Appendix B, Analysis of Variance, can be found in the original dissertation and have been deleted here to save space.]

Chapter 30
Milton Erickson - Deep Hypnosis and Its Induction

Editor: Milton Erickson was the twentieth century's premiere researcher in hypnosis. Both a psychiatrist and a psychologist, his work has had enormous influence on the understanding of hypnosis and the practice of hypnotherapy. Born in 1901 to a farm family living in Lowell, Wisconsin, he started life with significant handicaps: he was color blind and tone deaf, had heart arrhythmias, and suffered from dyslexia. At age 17 he was struck with polio. It nearly killed him and left him for a long time virtually paralyzed. During his youth Erickson had spontaneous hypnotic experiences that helped him survive and heal. These sparked his later interest in hypnosis. At age six, because of his dyslexia, he could not distinguish between a "3" and an "m" no matter how much he tried. One day his teacher guided his hand and he had a visual hallucination, a blinding flash of light, in which he saw the difference: "… in the center of that terrible outburst of light were the 3 and the m." "The m was standing on its legs and the 3 was on its side with the legs sticking out." Well into high school he failed to understand the meaning of the dictionary. When he wanted to look up a word, he would start with the first column

on the first page and read all the way through until he found the word he wanted. One day there was a blinding flash of light and he understood that the words were alphabetized. Erickson interprets this intense light that blots out everything but the sudden realization of knowledge as a spontaneous hypnotic hallucinatory experience. When he was first ill with polio, he overheard his doctors tell his mother that he would be dead by morning. He had his mother arrange his dresser so that the mirror would show him the sky to the west: "I was damned if I would die without seeing one more sunset." In the evening he saw the sunset covering the whole sky, but he did not see a tree, a fence, and a boulder that were there, too. After that he lost consciousness for three days. When he regained consciousness, he asked his father why the tree, fence, and boulder had been removed. They had not been removed; he had blocked them out in his hypnotic focus on the sunset. Later he used self-hypnosis to suppress the chronic pain from his polio. An extraordinary researcher, his collected works are gathered into 16 volumes. His comments on deep hypnosis and its induction are relevant to our understanding of the relation of deep trance to spiritual experience.

Milton H. Erickson, M.D.

General Considerations

A primary problem in all hypnotic work is the induction of satisfactory trance states. Especially is this true in any work based upon deep or profound hypnosis. Even the problem of inducing light trance states and maintaining them at a constant level is often a difficult task. Similarly, the securing of comparable degrees of hypnosis in different subjects and similar trance states in the same subject at different times frequently constitutes a major problem.

The reasons for these difficulties derive from the fact that hypnosis depends upon inter- and intrapersonal relationships. Such relationships are inconstant and alter in accord with personality reactions to each hypnotic development. Additionally, each individual personality is unique, and its patterns of spontaneous and responsive behavior necessarily vary in relation to time, situation, purposes served, and the personalities involved.

Statistically, certain averages may be obtained for hypnotic behavior, but such averages do not represent the performance of any one subject. Hence, they cannot be used to appraise either individual performances or even specific hypnotic phenomena. To judge trance depths and hypnotic responses, consideration must be given not only to average responses but to the various deviations and departures from the average that may be manifested by the individual. For example, catalepsy is a fairly standard form of hypnotic behavior, appearing usually in the light trance and persisting in the deep trance states. However, extensive experience will disclose that some subjects may never spontaneously develop catalepsy as a single phenomenon either in the light or deep trance. Others may manifest it only in the lighter stages of hypnosis, some only in the profound trances, and there are those who manifest it only in the transition from the light to the deeper levels of hypnosis. Even more confusing are those subjects who manifest it only in relation to other types of hypnotic behavior, such as amnesia. In other words, however good an indicator of trance states catalepsy may be on the average, its presence or absence for any one subject must be interpreted entirely in terms of that subject's total hypnotic behavior.

Efforts have been made to solve some of these difficulties by developing special techniques for the induction and regulation of hypnotic trances, sometimes with little regard for the nature of hypnotic behavior and its relationships. One of the most absurd of these endeavors, illustrative of a frequent tendency to disregard hypno-

sis as a phenomenon in favor of an induction technique as a rigidly controllable process apart from the subject's behavior, was the making of phonograph records. This was done on the assumption that identical suggestions would unquestionably and unvaryingly induce identical hypnotic responses in different subjects and at different times. There was a complete oversight of the individuality of subjects, their varying capacities to learn and to respond, and their differing attitudes, frames of reference, and purposes in engaging in hypnotic work. Additionally, there was an oversight of the importance of interpersonal relationships, however attenuated they may be in a given situation, and of the fact that these *interpersonal relationships* are both contingent and dependent upon the *intrapsychic* or *intrapersonal relationships* of the subject.

Even in so established a field as pharmacology, a standardized dose of a drug is actually an approximation as far as the individual's physiological response is concerned. When thought is given to the difficulty of "standardizing" such intangibles as inter- and intrapersonal relationships, the futility of a rigid hypnotic technique to secure controlled results is apparent. An awareness of the variability of human behavior and the need to meet it should be the basis of all hypnotic techniques.

In the problem of developing general techniques for the induction of trances and the eliciting of hypnotic behavior, there have been numerous uncritical utilizations of traditional misconceptions of hypnotic procedure. While the "eagle eye," the "crystal ball," strokings and passes, and similar aids as sources of mysterious force have been discarded by the scientifically trained, the literature abounds with reports of hypnotic techniques based upon the use of apparatus intended to limit and restrict the subject's behavior, to produce fatigue, and similar reactions as if they were the essential desiderata of hypnosis. Crystal balls held at a certain distance from the eyes, revolving mirrors, metronomes, and flashing lights are often

employed as the major considerations in the formulation of a hypnotic technique. As a result, too much emphasis is placed upon external factors and the subject's responses to them. Primarily, emphasis should be placed upon the intrapsychic behavior of the subject rather than upon the relationship to externalities. At best, apparatus is only an incidental aid, to be discarded at the earliest possible moment in favor of the utilization of the subject's behavior which may be initiated but not developed by the apparatus. However much staring at a crystal ball may be conducive to fatigue and sleep, neither of these results constitutes an essential part of the hypnotic trance. To illustrate: A number of subjects were systematically trained by a competent hypnotist to develop a trance by staring fixedly at a crystal ball held at a distance of 6 in. and slightly above the subject's eye level. As a result of this conditioning, efforts to hypnotize them without a crystal ball were difficult and, in some instances, ineffectual. Personal experimentation with these subjects disclosed that the measure of having them simply imagine that they were looking at a crystal ball resulted in more rapid trance induction and profounder trance states. Repetition of this procedure by colleagues and students of the author yielded similar results. Return to the actual crystal gazing resulted in the original slower and less profound trances characterized by a greater dependency upon external factors than upon intrapsychic processes.

Numerous experiments by the author and his colleagues, in which these experienced subjects watched silent pendulums or listened to soft music or to metronomes, disclosed that imaginary aids were much more effective than actual apparatus. The same findings were obtained with naïve subjects. Medical students were divided into two groups, one of which stared at a crystal ball and the other merely tried to visualize a crystal ball. The latter group gave the more rapid and better results. The experiment was repeated by having the second group listen to a metronome while the first group was instructed to depend upon auditory imagery of a metronome. Again, the imaginary

aid proved the more effective. Numerous variations of this investigation yielded similar results. In brief, the utilization of imagery rather than actual apparatus gives the subject the advantage of utilizing his actual capabilities without being hampered by an adjustment to non-essential externalities. This has been found true with experienced subjects as well as naïve subjects, and in the whole range of imagery from visual to kinesthetic.

Additionally, utilization of imagery in trance induction almost always facilitates the development of similar or related more complex hypnotic behavior. For example, the subject who experiences much difficulty in developing hallucinations often learns to develop them when a trance is induced by utilization of imagery.

Subjective accounts from many subjects explaining these findings may be summarized as follows:

"When I listen to the imaginary metronome, it speeds up or slows down, gets louder or fainter, as I start to go into a trance, and I just drift along. With the real metronome it remains distractingly constant, and it keeps pulling me back to reality instead of letting me drift along into a trance. The imaginary metronome is changeable and always fits in with just the way I'm thinking and feeling, but I have to fit myself to the real one."

Similar subjective accounts were secured by the author and by his colleagues and students independently in relation to a wealth of other external apparatus.

In this same connection mention should be made of the author's findings in experimental and clinical work centering around hypnotically induced visual hallucinations. Originally, an actual crystal ball was employed, but experience soon disclosed that a hallucinated crystal ball was more easily available and completely vari-

able and adaptable to the subject's needs. For example, a patient, greatly confused about her personal identity, was induced to visualize a number of crystal balls in which she could hallucinate a whole series of significant life experiences and make objective and subjective comparisons and, thus, to establish thereby the continuity of her life from one hallucinated experience to the next. With a real crystal ball the hallucinated experiences were physically limited in extent, and the changing and the superimposition of "scenes" were much less satisfactory.

Another important general consideration in trance induction concerns the appreciation of time as a factor in itself. Traditionally, the mystic force of a single glance from the eagle eye is sufficient to induce hypnosis. That this misconception has not really been properly discredited is readily realized when encounter is made in current literature of statements to the effect that 2 to 5 minutes' time is sufficient in which to induce any of the profound neuro- and psychophysiological changes of hypnosis. Nevertheless, these same writers would, in administering a powerful drug, wait a reasonable time for its effects. The expectation of practically instantaneous results from the spoken word indicates, at the least, an uncritical attitude and practice which militates against scientifically valid results. Unfortunately, much work has been published which has been based upon an unrecognized belief in the immediate omnipotence of hypnotic suggestions and a consequent failure to appreciate that responsive behavior in the hypnotic subject depends upon a time factor even as it does in the unhypnotized person. The hypnotic subject is often expected, in a few moments, to reorient himself completely psychologically and physiologically, and to perform complex tasks ordinarily impossible in the nonhypnotic state.

[This is in part a criticism of Dave Elman who wanted the doctors he trained to be able to induce deep hypnosis within two to three

minutes. See chapter seven, the Ultra Height Technique — **Editor**.]

Just as subjects vary individually from statistical averages, so do they vary in respect to time requirements. Additionally, their time requirements vary greatly from one type of behavior to another, and also in relation to their immediate frame of reference. Some subjects, who can develop visual hallucinations promptly, may require a relatively prolonged time to develop auditory hallucinations. The presence of a certain mood may actually facilitate or hinder hypnotic responses, and even incidental considerations may interfere with the development of hypnotic phenomena ordinarily possible for the subject. Thus, the fact that the author is a psychiatrist has more than once militated against a subject readily developing auditory hallucinations.

Certain subjects can develop profound trances in a decidedly brief period of time and are capable of readily manifesting exceedingly complex hypnotic phenomena. However, critical study of such subjects frequently discloses a high incidence of "as if" behavior. That is, such a subject, instructed, for example, to develop negative hallucinations for observers present, will behave as if those persons were absent, accomplishing this primarily by avoidance reactions and inhibition of responses. If such behavior is accepted as valid and as the most that can be expected, the subject is likely to remain arrested at that level of functioning. If, however, such subjects are given adequate time to reorganize their neuro- and psychophysiological processes, negative hallucinations can be developed which will satisfactorily withstand searching test procedures.

Too often, the ease with which a deep trance can be induced in a subject is uncritically accepted as a valid criterion of subsequent trance performances. Experience, however, with many such subjects will disclose a frequent tendency to return to a lighter trance state when given complicated hypnotic tasks. Such subjects, for various reasons, are thereby endeavoring to ensure adequate func-

tioning by enlisting the aid of conscious mental processes. Hence, unreliable and contradictory experimental findings are frequently obtained when apparently the experimental procedure was fully controlled.

Neither should the ease and rapidity of trance induction ever be mistaken as a valid indication of the ability to maintain a trance state. Rather, easy hypnotizability sometimes should be regarded as an indication of a need to allow adequate time for a reorientation of the subject's total behavior to permit full and sustained responses. To believe that the subject who readily develops a deep trance will remain deeply hypnotized indefinitely is a naïve assumption which can militate seriously against valid trance findings.

Also, there are those subjects who hypnotize easily, who develop a great variety of complex hypnotic behavior, and yet fail to learn to make some minor hypnotic adjustment. To illustrate, an excellent subject, capable of amazingly complex hypnotic behavior, was found to have extreme difficulty in relation to physical orientation. All experimental studies with him had to be done in a laboratory setting; otherwise, his functioning tended to be at an "as if" level. However, a hallucinatory laboratory situation was as satisfactory to him as a genuine laboratory. Another capable subject, easily hypnotized, could not develop dissociation and depersonalization states unless she were first induced to hallucinate herself elsewhere, preferably seeing herself reading a book at home. Once this was done, inconsistencies and contradictions in her dissociative behavior, otherwise present, disappeared. With both subjects, any effort to economize on time in establishing the laboratory or home situation, despite their rapid hypnotizability, resulted in faulty hypnotic responses. In other words, the general situation, even as time considerations, may be an essential factor in the development and maintenance of satisfactory trances.

The oversight and actual neglect of time as an important factor in hypnosis and the disregard of the individual needs of subjects account for much of the contradictoriness of hypnotic studies. Published estimates of the hypnotizability of the general population range from 5 to 70 per cent and even higher. The lower estimates are often due to a disregard of time as an important factor in the development of hypnotic behavior. Personal experience extending over 25 years with a total of well over 3,500 hypnotic subjects has been most convincing of the importance in hypnotic work of subject individuality and time values. One of the author's most capable subjects required less than 30 seconds to develop his first profound trance, with subsequent equally rapid and consistently reliable hypnotic behavior. A second remarkably competent subject required 300 hours of systematic labor before a trance was even induced. Thereafter, a 20- to 30-minute period of trance induction was requisite to secure valid hypnotic behavior from him.

Ordinarily, a total of 4 to 8 hours of initial training of the subject to go into a trance is sufficient. Then, since trance induction is one process and trance utilization is another, an allotment of time to permit the subject to reorganize behavioral processes in accord with the hypnotic work projected must necessarily be made, with full regard for the subject's capacities to learn and to respond. For example, muscular rigidity is usually produced in a few moments, but a satisfactory anesthesia or an analgesia for childbirth may take hours in divided training periods.

The length of time that the subject has been engaged in hypnotic work and the variety of his hypnotic experience is also important in hypnotic research. Often subjects are, literally speaking, transients, serving in only one or two experimental studies. Personal experience, as well as that of colleagues, has demonstrated that the more extensive and varied a subject's hypnotic experience is, the more effectively he can function in complicated problems. For this rea-

son, unless the project requirements are otherwise, the author prefers to do research with subjects who have experienced hypnosis repeatedly over a long period of time and who have been called upon to manifest a great variety of hypnotic phenomena. Lacking this, the subjects are systematically trained in different types of hypnotic behavior. In training a subject for hypnotic anesthesia for obstetrical purposes, she may be taught automatic writing and negative visual hallucinations as a preliminary foundation. The former is taught as a foundation for local dissociation of a body part and the latter as a means of instruction in not responding to stimuli. At first thought, such training might seem irrelevant, but experience has disclosed that it can be a highly effective procedure in securing the full utilization of the subject's capabilities. The goal sought is often infinitely more important than the apparent logic of the procedure, and the mere testing of a hypnotic procedure should not be regarded as a testing of the possibility of hypnotic phenomena.

The foregoing material has been presented as a general background pertinent to a discussion of the problems attendant upon the induction of profound or deep hypnosis. Now, more specific discussion will be offered concerning the nature of deep trances and their induction, but not with any view of trying to describe a specific technical procedure. The variability of subjects, the individuality of their general and immediate needs, their differences in time and situation requirements, the uniqueness of their personalities and capabilities, together with the demands made by the projected work, render impossible any absolutely rigid procedure. At best, a rigid procedure can be employed to determine its effectiveness in securing certain results, but, as such, it is a measure of itself primarily and not of the inherent nature of the results obtained. Even more apparent is this when it is recognized that trance induction for experimental work is actually a preliminary to trance utilization, which belongs to another category of behavior. Such utilization depends not upon the procedure employed to secure a trance

but upon the behavior developments that arise subsequent to the induction and from the trance state itself. Furthermore, however controlled a trance induction may be, the development of hypnotic phenomena and of psychological reactions to those phenomena introduces variables for which no rigid procedure of induction can provide controls. As an analogy, however dependent upon a controlled anesthesia a surgical operation may be, the actual surgery and surgical results belong to another category of events, merely facilitated by the anesthesia.

Description of Deep Hypnosis

Before offering a discussion of deep-trance induction, an effort will be made to describe deep hypnosis itself. However, it must be recognized that a description, no matter how accurate and complete, will not substitute for actual experience, nor can it be made applicable for all subjects because of subject individual variability. Therefore, any description of a deep trance must necessarily vary in minor details from one subject to another. There can be no absolute listing of hypnotic phenomena as belonging to any one level of hypnosis. Some subjects will develop phenomena in the light trance usually associated with the deep trance, and others in a deep trance will show some of the behavior commonly regarded as characteristic of the light trance. Some subjects, who in light trances show behavior usually typical of the deep trance, may show a loss of that same behavior when deep hypnosis actually develops. For example, subjects who easily develop amnesias in the light trance may just as easily fail to develop amnesia in the deep trance. The reason for such apparent anomalies of behavior lies not in any inability of the subject to manifest generally characteristic behavior but in the entirely different psychological orientation of the deeply hypnotized person as contrasted to his orientation in lighter stages. At the lighter levels there is an admixture of conscious understandings and expectations and a certain amount of conscious par-

ticipation. In the deeper stages, functioning is, more properly, at an unconscious level of awareness.

Hence, in the deep trance the subject behaves in accordance with unconscious patterns of awareness and response which frequently differ from his conscious patterns. Especially is this so in naïve subjects whose lack of experience with hypnosis and whose actual ignorance of hypnotic phenomena unwittingly interfere with the development of deep-trance phenomena, until experience permits a diffusion of understandings from the conscious to the unconscious mind.

The example of this most frequently encountered in inducing deep trances is the difficulty of teaching good naïve subjects to talk in the profound trance. In the light trance they can speak more or less readily, but in the deep trance, where their unconscious mind is functioning directly, they find themselves unable to talk without awakening. The reason is that they have had a lifetime of experience and understanding in which talking is done at a conscious level, and they have no realization that talking is possible at a purely unconscious level of awareness. Subjects often need to be taught to realize their capabilities to function adequately whether at a conscious or an unconscious level of awareness. It is for this reason that the author has emphasized so often the need, in hypnotic work, of spending 4 to 8 or even more hours in inducing trances and in training the subjects to function adequately, before attempting hypnotic experimentation or therapy.

Experimental work requiring deep hypnosis and in which verbalization by the subject is necessary has been observed in which the contradictory or unsatisfactory results obtained derived from the subject's need to return to a lighter stage of hypnosis in order to vocalize, without the experimenter realizing the subject's need and what was happening. Yet, the task of teaching the subject how to remain in a deep trance, and to talk and to function as adequately

as at a conscious level of awareness, is relatively easy. The subject who seems unable to learn to talk while in the deep trance can be taught automatic writing, to read silently that writing, and to mouth silently as he reads; then it is a relatively simple step to equate the motor activity of writing and mouthing into actual speaking. A little practice, and speech, contrary to the subject's past experiential understandings, becomes possible at the unconscious level of functioning. The situation is similar in relationship to other types of hypnotic phenomena. Pain is a conscious experience, and analgesia or anesthesia often needs to be taught in a like fashion. The same may be true for hallucinations, regression, amnesia, or whatever phenomena may be desired. Some subjects require extensive instruction in a number of regards, and others can translate learnings in one field to a problem of another sort.

All of the above is essentially an introduction to a description of the nature of a deep trance. Stated briefly, deep hypnosis is that level of hypnosis that permits the subject to function adequately and directly at an unconscious level of awareness without interference by the conscious mind.

In other words, the subject in a deep trance functions in accord with unconscious understandings, is independent of those forces to which his conscious mind ordinarily responds, and behaves in the reality which exists in the given situation for his subconscious or unconscious mind. Conceptions, memories, and ideas constitute his world of reality, and the actual reality with which he is surrounded is useful only insofar as it can be utilized in the hypnotic situation. Such external reality does not constitute necessarily concrete objective matter possessed of intrinsic values. Thus, the subject can write automatically on paper and read what he has written. Also, he can hallucinate equally well the paper, the pencil, and the motor behavior of writing and read that "writing." The intrinsic significance of the actual pencil and paper derives from the subjective experiential processes

within the subject, and, once used, they cease to be a reality part of his total hypnotic situation. In light trances or in the waking state, pencil and paper are reality objects possessed of inherent significances with which one must deal in addition to those significances peculiar to the individual mind.

A further elaboration warranted is that the reality of the deep trance must necessarily be in accord with the fundamental needs and structure of the total personality. Thus it is that the profoundly neurotic person in the deep trance can, in that situation, be freed from his otherwise overwhelming neurotic behavior, and thereby a foundation can be laid for his therapeutic re-education in accord with the fundamental personality. The overlay of neuroticism, however extensive, does not distort the central core of the personality, though it may disguise and cripple the manifestations of it. Similarly, any attempt to force upon the hypnotic subject, however deep the trance, suggestions not acceptable to the total personality leads either to a rejection of the suggestions or to a transformation of them so that they can be satisfied by pretense behavior so often accepted as valid in attempted studies of hypnotically induced antisocial behavior. The need of appreciating the subject as an individual possessed of a personality structure which must be respected cannot, indeed, be overemphasized. Such appreciation and respect constitute a foundation for recognizing and differentiating conscious and unconscious behavior. Only an awareness of what constitutes behavior deriving from the unconscious mind of the subject enables the hypnotist to induce and to maintain deep trances.

For convenience of conceptualization only, deep trances may be classified as (1) somnambulistic, and (2) stuporous. In the well-trained subject the former is that type of trance in which the subject is seemingly awake and functioning adequately, freely, and well in the total hypnotic situation in a manner similar to that of

the nonhypnotized person. By a well-trained subject is not meant one laboriously taught to behave in a certain way, but rather a subject trained to rely completely upon his own unconscious patterns of response and behavior.

An example illustrative of this is the instance in which the author, as a teaching device for the audience, had a subject in a profound somnambulistic trance conduct a lecture and demonstration of hypnosis, unaided by the author, before a group of psychiatrists and psychologists. Although many in the audience had had experience with hypnosis, none detected that she was in a trance. A similar instance concerns a psychiatrist, a student and subject of the author's, who, without the author's previous knowledge and as a personal experiment in autohypnosis, conducted a staff meeting and presented a case history successfully without her trance state being detected. However, once apprised of the situation, the audience could readily recognize the tremendous differences between ordinary conscious behavior and trance behavior, and repetitions of this procedure were detected.

The stuporous trance is characterized by primarily passive responsive behavior, marked by both psychological and physiological retardation. Spontaneous behavior and initiative, so characteristic of the somnambulistic state if allowed to develop, are lacking. There is likely to be a marked perseveration of incomplete responsive behavior, and there is a definite loss of ability to appreciate the self. Medical colleagues asked by the author to examine subjects in a stuporous trance without knowledge of the hypnotic situation have repeatedly offered the tentative opinion of a narcotized state. In the author's experience the stuporous trance is difficult to obtain in many subjects, apparently because of their objection to losing their awareness of themselves as persons. Its use by the author has been limited primarily to the study of physiological behavior and to its therapeutic application in certain types of profoundly neurotic patients.

[Fear of "losing awareness of themselves as persons" in stuporous trance is equivalent to "ego-loss" in unitive trance. Erickson was primarily dealing with neurotic subjects, whereas Sherman and Feldman were working with well-functioning individuals — **Editor**]

Problems of Deep-Trance Induction

An exposition of the numerous problems of deep-trance induction will be presented by means of a discussion of the major considerations involved, with a detailing of procedures that may be used and the purposes to be served. Although the author is presenting his own experience, this has been confirmed by the experience and practice of his students and colleagues. These considerations will be listed and discussed separately.

1. Trance induction versus trance utilization.

Foremost among the major considerations in any work with deep hypnosis is the need to recognize that trance induction is one thing, and trance utilization is another, even as surgical preparation and anesthesia is one thing, and the surgery is another. This has been mentioned before and is repeated here for emphasis. Unless the work projected is no more than a study of trance induction itself, this differentiation must be made by both the subject and the hypnotist. Otherwise, there can be a continuance of trance-induction behavior into the trance state with the result that trance activities become an admixture of partial and incomplete induction responses, elements of conscious behavior, and actual trance behavior.

2. Differentiation of trance behavior from ordinary conscious behavior.

Directly related to the first consideration is the recognition and differentiation of conscious behavior from the behavior arising from

the unconscious. In this matter, experience is the only teacher, and careful study of behavior manifestations is necessary. This is best accomplished in relationship to reality objects. The subject in profound hypnosis can be instructed to note well and thoroughly an actual chair. Secret removal of that chair does not necessarily interfere with his task. He can continue to see it hallucinatorily in its original position, and sometimes to see it at the same time in a new position as a duplicate chair. Each image is then possessed of the same reality values to him. In the ordinary conscious state such behavior would be impossible or a pretense. Or, if the subject discovers that the chair has been moved, searching study will disclose other mental adjustments. Thus, he may develop a different orientation. For example, a chair specified as in the northeast corner, secretly moved to the southwest corner, may result in a new spatial orientation of the subject so that, to him, the chair remains unmoved in the northeast corner, his sense of direction having altered to meet the situational need.

Similarly, the induced hallucination of a person by a comparable procedure, resulting in two visual images, confronts the subject with the question of which visual image is real. Such a development could not occur in the ordinary conscious state. Neither could there be the spontaneous solution, witnessed by the author on several occasions, achieved especially by psychology and medical students, in which the subject would silently wish that a certain movement would be made by the two figures. The figure responding to that silent wish could then be recognized as hallucinatory. The reality to the self of the subject's hypnotic behavior and its recognition by the hypnotist is essential to induce and to permit adequate functioning in the trance state. Failure of such recognition permits the acceptance of inadequate responses as valid manifestations and causes oversight of the prolonged and intensive effort required for various types of hypnotic phenomena.

3. Orientation of all hypnotic procedure about the subject.

All techniques of procedure should be oriented about the subject and his needs in order to secure his full cooperation. The actual projected hypnotic work should be no more than a part of the total hypnotic situation, and it should be adapted to the subject, not the subject to the work. These needs may range from the important to the insignificant, but, in the hypnotic situation, an inconsequential matter may become crucial.

As an illustrative example, a subject, repeatedly used by another hypnotist with equivocal and unsatisfactory results in an experiment involving the use of a plethysmograph on one hand, gave good experimental cooperation and results when the author recognized his unconscious need to have his left-handedness recognized by placing the plethysmograph on his left rather than his right hand. This done, it was found that he could then also cooperate when his right hand was used. An ambidextrous subject, in an experiment involving automatic writing and drawing, was found to insist unconsciously upon the privilege of using either hand at will. Other subjects, especially medical and psychology students, have often insisted at an unconscious level upon the satisfaction of mere whims or the performance of other hypnotic work before their full cooperation could be secured for the experimental project for which they had volunteered.

A patient with a circumscribed neurotic disability was both unable and unwilling to pay for therapy. Also, he was unwilling to receive treatment without first making payment. Accordingly, he was induced to act as a volunteer subject for a long series of experiments, with no attempt at therapy, which was at his insistence. After more than a year of experimental work, he unconsciously reached the conclusion that his volunteered hypnotic services constituted adequate payment for therapy, which he then accepted fully.

In brief, a subject's psychological needs, no matter how trivial and irrelevant, need to be met as fully as possible in hypnosis where inter- and intrapersonal relationships are so vital. Oversight or neglect of this consideration will often lead to unsatisfactory, equivocal, and even contradictory results. Indeed, when contradictory results are obtained from a subject, there is a need to review the entire hypnotic situation from this point of view.

4. Recognition of the need to protect the subject.

A subject needs to be protected at all times as a personality possessed of rights, privileges, and privacies and recognized as being placed in a seemingly vulnerable position.

Regardless of how well informed and intelligent a subject may be, there exists always, whether recognized or not, a general questioning uncertainty about what will happen or what may or may not be said or done. Even subjects who have unburdened themselves freely and without inhibition to the author as a psychiatrist have manifested this need to protect the self and to put the best foot forward no matter how freely the wrong foot has been exposed.

This protection should properly be given the subject in both the waking and the trance states. It is best given in an indirect way in the ordinary waking state and more directly in the trance state.

For example, a 20-year-old girl volunteered as an experimental subject but always reported for work in the company of a tactless sharp-tongued associate who constituted a serious obstacle to hypnotic work. After a considerable amount of work the subject began reporting alone, and some time later she explained with mixed amusement and embarrassment, "I used to bring Ruth with me because she is so awfully catty that I knew I wouldn't do or say anything I didn't want to." She then told of her desire for ther-

apy for some concealed phobic reactions she had originally been unwilling to disclose to anyone. Her experimental work both before and after therapy was excellently done.

In working with new subjects, and always when planning to induce deep trances, a systematic effort is made to demonstrate to the subjects that they are in a fully protected situation. Measures to this end are relatively simple and seemingly absurdly inadequate. Nevertheless, personality reactions make them effective. For example, a psychology graduate volunteered as a demonstration subject for a seminar group. A light trance was induced with some difficulty, and her behavior suggested her need for assurance of protection. Under the pretext of teaching her automatic writing, she was instructed to write some interesting sentence and, having written it, not to show it until after automatic writing as a topic had been discussed. Hesitantly, she wrote briefly. She was told to turn the paper face down so that not even she could read what she had written. Handed a new sheet of paper, she was asked to write automatically her conscious and unconscious answers to the question, "Are you willing to have me read what you wrote?" Both written replies were "yes," to which was added, also automatically, "anybody."

The suggestion was offered that there was no urgency about reading her sentence since it was her first effort at automatic writing, that it might be more interesting to fold it up and put it away in her purse and at some later time to compare the script with further automatic writing she might do. Following this, a deep trance was easily and readily induced.

Some time later she explained, "I really wanted to go into a trance but I didn't know if I could trust you, which was silly because everything was being done in front of the whole class. When you asked me to write, my hand just impulsively wrote, 'Do I love Jerry?' and then I wrote that you or anybody else could read it. But when you just told

me to put it away and later just examine it for the handwriting, without even hinting about a possible meaning of the writing, I knew then that I had no reason whatever for any hesitation. And I also knew that I could answer my own question later instead of doing it all at once and wondering if I was right."

This type of example has been encountered many times, and this general method of handling the need for ego protection has been found remarkably effective in securing deep, unconscious cooperation in inducing deep trances.

Another measure frequently employed in this same connection is that of instructing the subject in a light trance to dream a very vivid, pleasing dream, to enjoy it, and, upon its completion, to forget it and not to recall it until so desired at some later date in a suitable situation. Such instruction is manifold in its effects. It gives the subject a sense of liberty which is entirely safe and yet can be in accord with any unconscious ideas of license and freedom in hypnosis. It utilizes familiar experiences in forgetting and repression. It gives a sense of security and confidence in the self, and it also constitutes a posthypnotic suggestion to be executed only at the subject's desire. Thus, a broad foundation is laid conducive to the development of profound trances.

This type of comprehensive suggestion is employed extensively by the author since it serves to initiate a wealth of hypnotic responses, pleasing to the subject and constructive for the hypnotist, in a fashion fully protective of the subject and thereby insuring cooperation.

Another measure, of a somewhat negative character, is that of instructing the lightly hypnotized subject to withhold some item of information from the hypnotist. This item should, preferably, be one of a definitely personal character not fully recognized by the subject as such. It might be his middle name, what member of his family he resembles most, or the first name of his best girl friend when he was

a little boy. Thus, the subject discovers, by actual experience, that he is not a helpless automaton, that he can actually enjoy cooperating with the hypnotist, that he can succeed in executing hypnotic suggestions, and that it is his behavior rather than the hypnotist's that leads to success. All of these reactions are essential in securing deep trances. Also, the subject learns unwittingly that, if he can act successfully upon a negative suggestion, the converse is true.

Another frequently overlooked form of protection for the subject as a personality is the expression of appreciation for the subject's services. Full regard must be given to the human need to succeed and to the desire for recognition by the self and by others of that success. Deprivation of the subject of success and of its recognition constitutes a failure to protect the subject as a sentient being. Such failure may imperil the validity of hypnotic work since the subject may feel that his efforts are not appreciated, and this may result in lesser degrees of cooperation. Even more can this be recognized when it is realized that emotional reactions are not necessarily rational, especially so at an unconscious level of reaction. Experience has shown that appreciation must be definitely expressed in some manner, preferably first in the trance state and later in the ordinary waking state. In projects where expressed appreciation is precluded, the subject can be taught in other situations full confidence in the hypnotist's appreciation of services rendered. In any hypnotic work, careful attention must be given to the full protection of the subject's ego by meeting readily his needs as an individual.

5. The utilization of all of the subject's responsive and spontaneous behavior during trance induction.

Often, techniques of hypnosis center primarily about what the hypnotist does or says to secure trances, with too little attention directed to what the subject is doing and experiencing. Actually, the development of a trance state is an intrapsychic phenomenon,

dependent upon internal processes, and the activity of the hypnotist serves only to create a favorable situation. As an analogy, an incubator supplies a favorable environment for the hatching of eggs, but the actual hatching derives from the development of life processes within the egg.

In trance induction the inexperienced hypnotist often tries to direct or to bend the subject's behavior to fit the hypnotist's conception of how the subject should behave. There should be a constant minimization of the role of the hypnotist and a constantly increasing enlargement of the subject's role. An example may be cited of a volunteer subject, used later to teach hypnosis to medical students. After a general discussion of hypnosis she expressed a willingness to go into a trance immediately. The suggestion was offered that she select the chair and position she felt would be most comfortable. When she had settled herself to her satisfaction, she remarked that she would like to smoke a cigarette. She was immediately given one, and she proceeded to smoke lazily, meditatively watching the smoke drifting upward. Casual conversational remarks were offered about the pleasure of smoking, of watching the curling smoke, the feeling of ease in lifting the cigarette to her mouth, the inner sense of satisfaction of becoming entirely absorbed just in smoking comfortably and without need to attend to any external things. Shortly, casual remarks were made about inhaling and exhaling, these words timed to fit in with her actual breathing behavior. Others were made about the ease with which she could almost automatically lift her cigarette to her mouth and then lower her hand to the arm of the chair. These remarks were also timed to coincide with her actual behavior. Soon, the words "inhale," "exhale," "lift," and "lower" acquired a conditioning value of which she was unaware because of the seemingly conversational character of the suggestions. Similarly, casual suggestions were offered in which the words sleep, sleepy, and sleeping were timed to her eyelid behavior.

Before she had finished the cigarette she had developed a light trance. Then the suggestion was made that she might continue to enjoy smoking as she slept more and more soundly; that the cigarette would be looked after by the hypnotist while she absorbed herself more and more completely in deep sleep; that, as she slept, she would continue to experience the satisfying feelings and sensations of smoking. A satisfactory profound trance resulted, and she was given extensive training to teach her to respond in accord with her own unconscious pattern of behavior.

Thereafter, she was presented on a number of occasions to groups of medical students as a volunteer subject with whom they might work. Her behavior with them was essentially the same as with the author. However, her request to smoke a cigarette was variously handled by the students. Some tactfully dissuaded her from thus postponing the trance induction, some joined her in smoking, and some patiently waited for her to finish. Only after the cigarette question was disposed of in some manner was she allowed to settle down to the task of being hypnotized. The result in every instance was a failure. At a final session with all of the students who had participated, two other students were brought in separately to attempt to hypnotize her. Both of these had been given independently the above account of the author's utilization of the subject's behavior. Both induced profound trances. Then the other students, following the examples set them, also succeeded.

This case has been cited in some detail since it illustrates so clearly the importance of the hypnotist adapting whatever technique he may be employing to the behavioral activities of the subject. To interpret that subject's desire to smoke as an active resistance to trance induction would be incorrect; rather, it was an expression of an actual willingness to cooperate in a way fitting to her needs. It needed to be utilized as such rather than to be overcome or abolished as resistance.

Many times the apparent active resistance encountered in subjects is no more than an unconscious measure of testing the hypnotist's willingness to meet them halfway instead of trying to get them to act entirely in accord with his ideas. Thus, one subject, who had been worked with unsuccessfully by several hypnotists, volunteered to act as a demonstration subject. When her offer was accepted, she seated herself in a stiffly upright, challenging position on the chair facing the audience. This apparently unpropitious behavior was met by a casual conversational remark to the audience that hypnosis was not necessarily dependent upon complete relaxation or automatism, but that hypnosis could be induced in a willing subject if the hypnotist was willing himself to accept the subject's behavior fully. She responded to this by rising and asking if she could be hypnotized standing up. Her inquiry was countered by the suggestion, "Why not demonstrate that it can be?" A series of suggestions resulted in the rapid development of a deep trance. Inquiries by the audience developed that she had read extensively on hypnosis and that she objected strenuously to the frequently encountered misconception of the hypnotized person as a passively responsive automaton, incapable of self-expression. She explained further that it should be made clear that spontaneous behavior was fully as feasible as responsive activity, and that utilization of hypnosis could be made effectively by recognition of this fact.

It should be noted that the reply, "Why not demonstrate that it can be?" constituted an absolute acceptance of her behavior, committed her fully to the experience of being hypnotized, and ensured her full cooperation in achieving her own purposes as well as those of the hypnotist.

Throughout the demonstration, she frequently offered suggestions to the author about what next he might ask her to demonstrate, sometimes actually altering the suggested task. At other times she was completely passive in her responses.

Another subject, a graduate in psychology with whom extensive work requiring a deep trance was projected, experienced great difficulty in going into one. After several hours of intensive effort, she timidly inquired if she could advise on technique, even though she had no other experience with hypnosis. Her offer was gladly accepted, whereupon she gave counsel: "You're talking too fast on that point; you should say that very slowly and emphatically and keep repeating it. Say that very rapidly and wait awhile and then repeat it slowly, and please, pause now and then to let me rest, and please don't split your infinitives."

With her aid, a profound, almost stuporous trance was secured in less than 30 minutes. Thereafter she was employed extensively in a great variety of experimental work and was used to teach others how to induce deep trances.

Acceptance of such help is an expression neither of ignorance nor of incompetence; rather, it is an honest recognition that deep hypnosis is a joint endeavor in which the subject does the work and the hypnotist tries to stimulate the subject to make the necessary effort. It is an acknowledgment that no person can really understand the individual patterns of learning and response of another. While this measure works best with highly intelligent, seriously interested subjects, it is also effective with others. Rightly handled, it establishes a feeling of trust, confidence, and active participation in a joint task. Moreover, it serves to dispel misconceptions of the mystical powers of the hypnotist and to define indirectly the respective roles of the subject and the hypnotist.

Fortunately, this experience occurred early in the author's work and has been found of immense value ever since in inducing hypnosis of every degree and in the eliciting of highly complex hypnotic behavior.

One often reads in the literature about subject resistance and the techniques employed to circumvent or overcome it. In the author's experience the most satisfactory procedure is that of accepting and utilizing the resistance as well as any other type of behavior, since, properly used, they can all favor the development of hypnosis. This can be done by wording suggestions in such a fashion that a positive or a negative response or an absence of response are all actually responsive behavior. For example, a resistive subject who is not receptive to suggestions for hand levitation can be told, "Shortly your right hand, or it may be your left hand, will begin to lift up, or it may press down, or it may not move at all, but we will wait to see just what happens. Maybe the thumb will be first, or you may feel something happening in your little finger, but the really important thing is not whether your hand lifts up or presses down or just remains still; rather, it is your ability to sense fully whatever feelings may develop in your hand."

With such wording, absence of motion, lifting up, and pressing down are all covered, and any of the three possibilities constitutes responsive behavior. Thus, a situation is created in which the subject can express his resistance in a constructive, cooperative fashion. Indeed, the manifestation of resistance by a subject is best utilized by developing a situation in which resistance serves a purpose. Hypnosis cannot be resisted if there is no hypnosis attempted. The hypnotist, recognizing this, should so develop the situation that any opportunity to manifest resistance becomes contingent upon hypnotic responses, with a localization of all resistance upon irrelevant possibilities. The subject whose resistance is manifested by failure of hand levitation can be given suggestions that his right hand will levitate, his left hand will not. To resist successfully, contrary behavior must be manifested. The result is that the subject finds himself responding to suggestion, but to his own satisfaction. In the scores of instances where this measure has been employed, less than a half dozen subjects realized that

a situation had been created in which their ambivalence had been resolved. One writer on hypnosis naively employed a similar procedure in which he asked subjects to resist going into a trance in an effort to demonstrate that they could not resist hypnotic suggestion. The subjects cooperatively and willingly proved that they could readily accept suggestions to prove that they could not. The study was published in entire innocence of its actual meaning.

Whatever the behavior offered by the subject, it should be accepted and utilized to develop further responsive behavior. Any attempt to "correct" or alter the subject's behavior, or to force him to do things he is not interested in, militates against trance induction and certainly against deep trances. The very fact that a subject volunteers to be hypnotized and then offers resistance indicates an ambivalence which, recognized, can be utilized to serve successfully the purposes of both the subject and the hypnotist. Such recognition and concession to the needs of the subject and the utilization of his behavior do not constitute, as some authors have declared, an "unorthodox technique" based upon "clinical intuition"; instead, they constitute a simple recognition of existing conditions, based upon full respect for the subject as a functioning personality.

6. The basing of each progressive step of trance induction upon actual accomplishments by the subject.

These accomplishments may be those of the hypnotic situation, or they may belong to the subject's everyday experience. Merely volunteering to act as a subject may be the outcome of a severe inner struggle. Relaxing comfortably in a chair and disregarding external distractions is an accomplishment. Absence of response to hand-levitation suggestions is not necessarily a failure, since the very immobility of the hands is, in itself, an accomplishment. Willingness to sit quietly while the hypnotist laboriously offers numerous suggestions, apparently futilely, is still another accomplishment. Each of these

constitutes a form of behavior that may be emphasized as an initial successful step toward a greater development in the trance state.

To illustrate, a Ph.D. in psychology, extremely scornful and skeptical of hypnosis, challenged the author to "try to work your little fad" on her in the presence of witnesses who would be able to attest to the author's failure. However, she did state that if it could be demonstrated to her that there were such a phenomenon as hypnosis, she would lend herself to any studies the author might plan. Her challenge and conditions were accepted. Her promise to act as a subject, if convinced, was carefully and quietly emphasized since it constituted behavior of her own and could become the foundation for future trance behavior. Next, a technique of suggestion was employed which was believed certain to fail, which it did. Thus, the subject was given a feeling of success, gratifying to her, but carrying an admixture of some regret over the author's discomfiture. This regret constituted a foundation stone for future trances. Then, apparently as a face-saving device for the author, the topic of ideomotor activity was raised. After some discussion, indirect suggestion led her to express a willingness to cooperate in experimentation of ideomotor activity. She qualified this by stating, "Don't try to tell me that ideomotor activity is hypnosis, because I know it isn't." This was countered by the observation that ideomotor activity could undoubtedly be achieved in hypnosis even as in the waking state. Thus, another foundation stone was laid for future trance activity.

Hand levitation was selected as a good example of ideomotor activity, and she acceded readily, since she was unacquainted with the author's frequent use of hand levitation as an initial trance-induction procedure.

In the guise of a pedantic discussion, a series of hand-levitation suggestions was offered. She responded quickly and delightedly. This

was followed by the suggestion that, as a preliminary to experimental work, it might be well if she absorbed herself completely in the subjective aspects of the experience, disregarding, as she did so, all external stimuli except the author's remarks. Thus, a further stone was laid. Within 10 minutes she developed a profound somnambulistic trance. After some minutes of further suggestion of variations in her ideomotor responses, the remark was made that she might like to discontinue and to return to another point in the original discussion. Thus, she was given a suggestion to awaken from the trance, safe from any autocritical understandings. She agreed and wakened easily, and the author immediately resumed the original discussion. Shortly, a second trance was induced by the same procedure, followed in the course of 4 hours by 4 more.

During the third trance she was tested for catalepsy, which was present. This alarmed and distressed her, but before she could awaken, it was described to her satisfaction as "arrested ideomotor activity," and this not only reassured her but stimulated further interest.

In the next two trances she willingly undertook to experience "other associated phenomena of ideomotor activity." Thus, she was instructed to glance at the witnesses and then to note that, as her attention to the others waned and she became more absorbed subjectively in the ideomotor behavior of her hands, she would cease to see the others. In this way she was taught to develop negative hallucinations by extending her interest in ideomotor activity to an exclusion of other behavior. By a comparable measure she was taught positive hallucinations by visualizing her levitated hand so clearly in two different positions that she would not be able to distinguish her hand from its visual image in another position. This done, the specious argument was offered that, as her attention to her ideomotor activity waxed and waned, she would variously see and not see, hear and not hear the others present, that she might visualize in duplicate others present, and that she could

forget the presence of others and even ideas about them or any other thing. By this means, she was induced to experience a wealth of hypnotic phenomena.

There followed the more difficult task of informing her that she had been hypnotized. This was done by suggesting, in the sixth trance, that she recall her feelings "during the first demonstration of ideomotor activity." As she did so, it was pointed out that her self-absorption might possibly be compared to a somewhat similar state that was manifested in hypnosis. Proceeding to the "second demonstration," the suggestion was offered that her behavior was almost trancelike. She was then asked to visualize herself as she must have appeared in the "third demonstration." As she did so, she was asked to comment on her cataleptic behavior, to develop auditory imagery of what had been said to her, and to note the responses made. This time, hypnosis was hinted at as a definite probability, and she was tactfully praised for her ability to develop the imagery, visual and auditory, that enabled her to view so clearly her behavior. Immediately, she was asked to consider the fourth instance. As she did so, she asked hesitantly if, in that demonstration, she were not really in a trance. Assured that she could understand freely, comfortably, and with a most pleasing sense of actual accomplishment, she declared, "Then I must really be in a trance right now." The author agreed and rapidly reminded her of every success she had achieved and how excellently she had been able to utilize her ideomotor activity to expand her field of personal experience. She was further instructed to review mentally the entire evening and to give the author any counsel she wished.

After quiet meditation she asked the author not to tell her, after she had awakened, that she had been hypnotized, but to give her time to reorganize her general attitudes toward hypnosis and toward the author as an exponent of hypnosis, and time to get used to the error of her previous thinking.

It was agreed, and she was told she would awaken with an amnesia for her trance experience and with a pleased feeling that both she and the author were interested in ideomotor phenomena. Suggestion was then given that her unconscious mind would take much pleasure in keeping awareness away from her consciousness of the fact that she had been hypnotized, and that this secret could be shared by her unconscious with the author. She was instructed that her unconscious could and would so govern her conscious mind that she could learn about hypnosis and her hypnotic experience in any way that was satisfying and informative to her as a total personality. By this posthypnotic suggestion the subject was given still further hypnotic training in relation to the independent functioning of the unconscious and conscious mind, the development of a hypnotic amnesia, and the execution of posthypnotic work. In addition, she was made aware at a deep level that she, as a personality, was fully protected, that her functioning rather than the hypnotist's was the primary consideration in trance induction, and that utilization of one process of behavior could be made a steppingstone to development of a similar but more complex form.

The outcome was most interesting. Two days later the subject offered her apologies for her "flippant skepticism" about hypnosis and her "unwarranted" disparagement of the author's work. She added that she was much amused by her need to apologize. A few days later she volunteered to act as a subject, stating she was now seriously interested and would like to participate in some investigative studies. She proved to be a most productive subject over a period of years.

This lengthy example illustrates many of the considerations this author has found of tremendous importance in inducing deep trances. The little item of having a "secret understanding" between the subject's unconscious mind and the hypnotist has many times proved to be remarkably effective as a means of securing deep trances in otherwise aggressively resistant subjects. By virtue of

this, they could make conscious and express freely and safely their resistances. At the same time they could have a profound feeling that they were cooperating fully, securely, and effectively. The satisfaction so derived by the subject leads to a desire for continued successful accomplishment, and active resistances are rapidly dispelled, resolved, or constructively utilized.

In brief, whatever the behavior manifested by the subject, it should be accepted and regarded as grist for the mill. Acceptance of her need for the author to fail led to ideomotor activity. This led progressively to a wealth of hypnotic phenomena based either directly or indirectly upon ideomotor responses and culminated in a success pleasing to her as well as to the hypnotist. Had any effort been made to get that subject to conform to some rigid technique of trance induction, failure would have undoubtedly ensued, and rightly so, since the development of a trance was not to prove the author's ability but to secure experiential values and understandings by the subject.

Much of the foregoing material constitutes an exposition of the major considerations involved in the securing of deep trances. Some special hypnotic procedures which are usually successful will now be summarized. Full details are omitted due to space limitations and because of the constant shifting from one orientation to another which they require.

The Confusion Technique

For want of a better term, one of these special procedures may be termed the "confusion technique." It has been employed extensively for the induction of specific phenomena as well as deep trances. Usually, it is best employed with highly intelligent subjects interested in the hypnotic process, or with those consciously unwilling to go into a trance despite an unconscious willingness.

In essence, it is no more than a presentation of a whole series of individually differing, contradictory suggestions, apparently all at variance with each other, differently directed, and requiring a constant shift in orientation by the subject. For example, in producing hand levitation, emphatic suggestions directed to the levitation of the right hand are offered together with suggestions of the immobility of the left hand. Shortly, the subject becomes aware that the hypnotist is apparently misspeaking, since levitation of the left hand and immobility of the right are then suggested. As the subject accommodates himself to the seeming confusion of the hypnotist, thereby unwittingly cooperating in a significant fashion, suggestions of immobility of both hands are given, together with others of the simultaneous lifting of one and pressing down of the other. These are followed by a return to the initial suggestions.

As the subject tries, conditioned by his early cooperative response to the hypnotist's apparent misspeaking, to accommodate himself to the welter of confused, contradictory responses apparently sought, he finds himself at such a loss that he welcomes any positive suggestion that will permit a retreat from so unsatisfying and confusing a situation. The rapidity, insistence, and confidence with which the suggestions are given serve to prevent the subject from making any effort to bring about a semblance of order. At best, he can only try to accommodate himself and, thus, yield to the over-all significance of the total series of suggestions.

Or, while successfully inducing levitation, one may systematically build up a state of confusion as to which hand is moving, which more rapidly or more laterally, which will become arrested in movement, and which will continue and in what direction, until a retreat from the confusion by a complete acceptance of the suggestions of the moment becomes a greatly desired goal.

In inducing an extensive amnesia with a regression of the subject to earlier patterns of behavior, the "confusion technique" has been found extremely valuable and effective. It is based upon the utilization of everyday experiences familiar to everyone. To regress a subject to an earlier time in his life, a beginning is made with casual conversational suggestions about how easy it is sometimes to become confused as to the day of the week, to misremember an appointment as of tomorrow instead of yesterday, and to give the date as the old year instead of the new. As the subject correlates these suggestions with his actual past experiences, the remark is made that, although today is Tuesday, one might think of it as Thursday, but, since today is Wednesday and, since it is not important for the present situation whether it is Wednesday or Monday, one can call to mind vividly an experience of one week ago on Monday, that constituted a repetition of an experience of the previous Wednesday. This, in turn, is reminiscent of an event which occurred on the subject's birthday in 1948, at which time he could only speculate upon but not know about what would happen on the 1949 birthday and, even less so, about the events of the 1950 birthday, since they had not yet occurred. Further, since they had not occurred, there could be no memory of them in his thinking in 1948.

As the subject receives these suggestions, he can recognize that they carry a weight of meaningfulness. However, in order to grasp it, his tendency is to try to think in terms of his birthday of 1948, but to do so he has to disregard 1949 and 1950. Barely has he begun to so orient his thinking when he is presented with another series of suggestions to the effect that one may remember some things and forget others, that often one forgets things he is certain he will remember but which he does not, that certain childhood memories stand out even more vividly than memories of 1947, '46, '45, that actually every day he is forgetting something of this year as well as last year or of 1945 or '44, and even more so of '42, '41, and '40. As for 1935,

only certain things are remembered identifiably as of that year and yet, as time goes on, still more will be forgotten.

These suggestions are also recognized as carrying a weight of acceptable meaningfulness, and every effort the subject makes to understand it leads to acceptance of them. In addition, suggestions of amnesia have been offered, emphasis has been placed upon the remembering of childhood memories, and the processes of reorientation to an earlier age level are initiated.

These suggestions are given not in the form of commands or instructions but as thought-provoking comments, at first. Then, as the subject begins to respond, a slow, progressive shift is made to direct suggestions to recall more and more vividly the experiences of 1935 or 1930. As this is done, suggestions to forget the experiences subsequent to the selected age are given directly, but slowly, unnoticeably, and these suggestions are soon reworded to "forget many things, as naturally as one does, many things, events of the past, speculations about the future, but of course, forgotten things are of no importance–only those things belonging to the present–thoughts, feelings, events, only these are vivid and meaningful." Thus, a beginning order of ideas is suggested, needed by the subject but requiring a certain type of response.

Next, suggestions are offered emphatically, with increasing intensity, that certain events of 1930 will be remembered so vividly that the subject finds himself in the middle of the development of a life experience, one not yet completed. For example, one subject, reoriented to his sixth birthday, responded by experiencing himself sitting at the table anxiously waiting to see if his mother would give him one or two frankfurters. The Ph.D. previously mentioned was reoriented to an earlier childhood level and responded by experiencing herself sitting in the schoolroom awaiting a lesson assignment.

It is at this point that an incredible error is made by many serious workers in hypnosis. This lies in the unthinking assumption that the subject, reoriented to a period previous to the meeting with the hypnotist, can engage in conversation with the hypnotist, literally a nonexistent person. Yet, critical appreciation of this permits the hypnotist to accept seriously and not as a mere pretense a necessary transformation of his identity. The Ph.D., reliving her school experience, would not meet the author until more than 15 years later. So she spontaneously transformed his identity into that of her teacher, and her description as she perceived him in that situation, later checked, was found to be a valid description of the real teacher. For Dr. Erickson to talk to her in the schoolroom would be a ridiculous anachronism which would falsify the entire reorientation. With him seen as Miss Brown and responded to in the manner appropriate to the time, the schoolroom, and to Miss Brown, the situation became valid, a revivification of the past.

Perhaps the most absurd example of uncriticalness in this regard is the example of the psychiatrist who reported at length upon his experimental regression of a subject to the intrauterine stage, at which he secured a subjective account of intrauterine experiences. He disregarded the fact that the infant in utero neither speaks nor understands the spoken word. He did not realize that his findings were the outcome of a subject's compliant effort to please an uncritical, unthinking worker.

This need for the hypnotist to fit into the regression situation is imperative for valid results, and it can easily be accomplished. A patient under therapy was regressed to the age level of 4 years. Information obtained independently about the patient revealed that, at that time in her life, she had been entertained by a neighbor's gold hunting-case watch, a fact she had long forgotten. In regressing her as she approached the 4-year level, the author's gold hunting-case watch was gently introduced visually and with-

out suggestion. His recognition as that neighbor was readily and spontaneously achieved.

This transformation of the hypnotist into another person is not peculiar only in regression work. Many times, in inducing a deep trance in a newly met subject, the author has encountered difficulty until he recognized that, as Dr. Erickson, he was only a meaningless stranger and that the full development of a deep trance was contingent upon accepting a transformation of his identity into that of another person. Thus, a subject wishing for hypnotic anesthesia for childbirth consistently identified the author as a former psychology professor, and it was not until shortly before delivery that he was accorded his true identity. Failure to accept seriously the situation would have militated greatly against the development of a deep trance and the training for anesthesia.

Regardless of a hypnotist's experience and ability, a paramount consideration in inducing deep trances and securing valid responses is a recognition of the subject as a personality, the meeting of his needs, and an awareness and a recognition of his patterns of unconscious functioning. The hypnotist, not the subject, should be made to fit himself into the hypnotic situation.

The Rehearsal Technique

Another type of deep-trance induction may be termed the rehearsal or repetition technique. This can and often should be used for deep hypnosis and for individual phenomena. It can be employed in a variety of ways both experimentally and in therapeutic work, especially the latter. It consists of no more than seizing upon some one form of behavior that apparently gives a promise of good development and having the subject rehearse it and then repeat it in actuality.

Thus, a subject who makes little response to hypnosis but who seems clinically to be potentially a good subject may make abortive responses to suggestions of automatic writing. This partial tentative response can be seized upon as an instance of actual success by the subject. Then, a series of suggestions is given leading the subject to rehearse mentally what must have been done to achieve that particular success. Then he is asked to rehearse mentally how it could be done on plain paper, on ruled paper, with a pen, a pencil, or a crayon. Next, he is asked to perform what has been rehearsed mentally in the various permutations possible with that equipment. This can be followed by further rehearsals and repetitions, introducing as new variables hallucinatory paper and writing instruments, and new letters, words, and sentences. As this procedure is followed, the subject progressively develops a deeper and deeper trance, especially if the rehearsal and repetition are applied to other forms of hypnotic behavior.

Sometimes this technique can be applied in an entirely different fashion. For example, before a class of senior medical students, the author undertook to produce amnesia in a volunteer subject who wished both to go into a trance and to disappoint the author. The student expressed the opinion that he doubted if he could develop amnesia, and declared that he himself would propose his own proof of amnesia, namely the removal of his right shoe. Should this occur, he explained, it would constitute proof to him that he had developed an amnesia.

He developed a fairly good trance, and a whole series of instructions was given him, emphatically and repetitiously, that he perform several acts such as borrowing one student's cigarettes, another's glasses, etc. Repetitious command was also given to forget each simple task. Slipped unobtrusively into these suggestions was the statement that, after awakening, while discussing with the class the presence or absence of an amnesia for the assigned tasks, he would

cross the room, write a sentence on the blackboard, and sign his name, still continuing his discussion.

Upon awakening, he declared that he recollected everything said to him and that he had done. His statement was challenged, whereupon he heatedly gave a running account of the tasks and his performance of them. Without interrupting his argument, he wrote the sentence and signed his name. After he had returned to his seat, his attention was called to the writing which he disclaimed, emphasizing that his narration proved his remembrance, and he extended his right foot with the shoe on to prove conclusively that he had no amnesia. He then continued his remarks, absent-mindedly removing his shoe as he did so. This he did not discover until the class was dismissed. Systematically appraising the situation, he recognized that he had developed an amnesia with no conscious knowledge of the fact. The class was reconvened, and he was asked to duplicate the writing. As he was doing this, a few suggestions elicited a profound trance, and an extensive demonstration of the psychopathology of everyday life was conducted.

Thus, the subject had been given a long, repetitious list of simple performances, apparently to lead to amnesia but actually to permit him to succeed over and over in accord with his personal needs. Hence, the failures were really successful performances which could actually favor another successful performance, namely the development of amnesia. The unobtrusive slipping in of the suggestion of writing permitted him to set it apart from the other more urgent suggestions. Then, as he achieved his numerous successes of no amnesia, the pattern of response was completed for more successes by his proving the lack of amnesia, by exhibiting his shoe on his foot. This however, left unsatisfied his actual desire for still more success, namely his demonstration of an amnesia by the removal of his shoe, an item of behavior he himself had selected. This he achieved by a double amnesia for the writing and

the shoe removal, an even greater success than he had anticipated. Then, as he repeated the writing, he found himself again in the situation that had led to his most satisfying accomplishment. The situation led easily to a deep trance state by virtue of a repetition or rehearsal procedure.

Still another form of this technique has been found useful in inducing deep trances and in studies of motivation, association of ideas, regression, symbol analysis, repression, and the development of insight. It has proved a most effective therapeutic procedure.

This technique is primarily a matter of having the subject repeat over and over a dream, or, less preferably, a fantasy, in constantly differing guises. That is, he repeats a spontaneous dream or an induced dream with a different cast of characters, perhaps in a different setting, but with the same meaning. After the second dreaming the same instructions are given again, and this continues until the purposes to be served are accomplished. To illustrate, a patient offered this spontaneous dream of the previous night: "I was alone in a grass-covered meadow. There were knolls and curving rises in the ground. It was warm and comfortable. I wanted something dreadfully–I don't know what. But I was scared–paralyzed with fear. It was horrible. I woke up trembling."

Repeated, the dream was: "I was walking up a narrow valley. I was looking for something I had to find, but I didn't want it. I didn't know what I was looking for, but I knew something was forcing me to look for it and I was afraid of it, whatever it was. Then I came to the end of the valley where the walls came together and there was a little stream of water flowing from under a thick bush. That bush was covered with horrible thorns. It was poisonous. Something was pushing me closer and I kept getting smaller and smaller and I still feel scared."

The next repetition was: "This seems to have something to do with part of the last dream. It was spring and the logs were in the river and all the lumberjacks and all the men were there. Everybody owned one of the logs, me too. All the others had big hardwood logs but mine, when I got it, was a little rotten stick. I hoped nobody noticed and I claimed another, but when I got it, it was just like the first."

Again repeated: "I was in a rowboat fishing. Everybody was fishing. Each of the others caught a great big fish. I fished and fished and all I got was a little sickly fish. I didn't want it, but I had to keep it. I felt horribly depressed."

Again: "I went fishing again. There were lots of big fish shooting around in the water, but I caught only miserable little fish that would fall off the hook and float dead on the water. But I had to have a fish so I kept on fishing and got one that seemed to have a little life in it. So I put it in a gunny sack because I knew everybody should put his fish in a gunny sack. Everybody else did, and their fish always filled their gunny sacks completely. But my fish was just lost in the gunny sack, and then I noticed my gunny sack was all rotten and there was a hole in it, and a lot of slime and filth gushed out and my fish floated away in that horrible slime, belly up, dead. And I looked around and I was on that meadow I told you about and the gunny sack was under that bush with all those thorns and my good-for-nothing fish was floating down that stream of water I told you about, and it looked just like a rotten stick of wood."

A series of further repetitions finally resulted in the breaking down of extensive amnesias and blockings and his disclosure that, at puberty, under circumstances of extreme poverty, he had acted as a nurse for his mother, who had rejected him completely since infancy and who had died of an extensive neglected cancer of the genitals. Additionally, he told for the first time of his profound feelings of inferiority deriving from his lack of phallic develop-

ment, his strong homosexual inclinations, and his feeling that his only protection from homosexuality would be a yielding to the "horrible pressure and force society uses to shove you to heterosexuality."

This instance from a case history has been cited, in part, since it lends itself to summarization and illustrates unconscious processes so clearly. Each succeeding dream resulted in a more easily induced and more easily maintained trance, at the same time giving the patient greater freedom in his thinking and in his use of less and less abstruse symbolism.

A necessary caution in this regard is that, in utilizing this type of procedure for experimental or demonstration hypnosis, dreams of a pleasant character should be employed if possible. If not, the implantation of an artificial complex, thereby limiting the extent of unpleasant emotions, is desirable. In all instances care should be taken to discontinue the work should it tend to lead to a situation which the hypnotist is not competent to handle. Otherwise, acute emotional disturbances and active repressions may result, causing a loss to the hypnotist of the subject's good regard and services, in addition to causing emotional distress to the subject.

Another variation of the rehearsal method is that of having the subject visualize himself carrying out some hypnotic task and then adding to the visualization other forms of imagery such as auditory, kinesthetic, etc. For example, a patient under therapy for neurotic maladjustment had great difficulty in developing and maintaining a deep trance. By having her, as an induction procedure, mentally rehearse the probable general course of events for each exploratory or therapeutic session and then to hallucinate as fully as possible the probable experiences for that occasion, it was possible to elicit and maintain satisfactorily deep trances. By giving her "previews," she was able to develop and maintain

a profound trance. After exploration of the underlying causes of her problem, the next step in therapy was to outline in great detail, with her help, the exact course of activity that she would have to follow to free herself from past rigidly established habitual patterns of behavior. Then she was reoriented to a time actually 3 months in the future. Then the patient was able to offer a "reminiscent" account of her therapy and recovery. A wealth of details was given, affording an abundance of new material which could be incorporated in the final therapeutic procedure.

A comparable instance is that of a girl who was a most competent subject except before an audience. Then it was impossible to induce a deep trance or to maintain one induced in private. By having her rehearse a fantasied public demonstration for the future and then reorienting her to a date several weeks further in the future, she was able to regard the fantasy as an actual successful accomplishment of the past, much to her satisfaction. Immediately, she was asked to "repeat" her demonstration before a student group, which she willingly and successfully did. There was no recurrence of the difficulty even after she was given a full understanding of how she had been manipulated.

Subjects reoriented from the present to the actual future, instructed to look back upon proposed hypnotic work as actually accomplished, can often, by their "reminiscence," provide the hypnotist with understandings that can readily lead to much sounder work in deep trances. Certainly in therapy, as well as experimentally, the author has found this measure highly effective, since it permits elaboration of hypnotic work in fuller accord with the subject's total personality and unconscious needs and capabilities. It often permits the correction of errors and oversights before they can be made, and it furnishes a better understanding of how to develop suitable techniques. A subject employed in this manner can often render invaluable service in mapping out procedures and techniques to be employed in experimentation and therapy.

Multiple-Dissociation Technique

Another measure is frequently employed by the author in inducing deep trances, maintaining them, or utilizing them for extensive complex work. It is the induction of multiple visual hallucinations in which different but related things are visualized. (Many subjects can be taught "crystal gazing" in the light trance.) One patient, in a profoundly depressed, discouraged mood, readily seized the opportunity to intensify by contrast her unhappy mood by accepting the suggestion that she see in action in a crystal ball a happy incident of her childhood consciously forgotten. Utilizing her masochistic response to this, a second crystal ball was suggested in which she could see, simultaneously with the first, an incident belonging to another age level. Soon there was a total of a dozen hallucinatory crystals in each of which a life scene of a different age level was being portrayed by hallucinatory figures belonging to her experiential past. Thus, a combined experimental investigative and therapeutic situation was created in which her limited immediate willingness for a brief trance served to carry her into an extensive development hours long that served therapeutically her total personality needs.

This procedure is not limited to induced hallucinatory behavior. A musician, unresponsive to direct hypnotic suggestion, was induced to recall the experience of having his "thoughts haunted by a strain of music." This led to a suggested search for other similar experiences. Soon he became so absorbed in trying to recall forgotten memories and beating time as a kinesthetic aid that a deep trance developed. In other words, dissociation phenomena, whether spontaneous or induced, can be used in a repetitious manner to establish a psychological momentum to which the subject easily and readily yields.

Posthypnotic Techniques

In a previous paper in collaboration with E. M. Erickson, attention was directed to the spontaneous hypnotic trance developed in relation to the execution of posthypnotic tasks. In inducing hypnosis, light or deep, the hypnotist may introduce unobtrusively some form of posthypnotic suggestion that will permit the development subsequently of a spontaneous trance. This trance can then be utilized as a point of departure in developing a new trance state. Not all subjects respond to this procedure, but it often proves of immense value.

Sometimes a subject who is in only a light trance can be given a simple posthypnotic suggestion. As he develops a spontaneous trance in executing the posthypnotic act, suggestions may be given to deepen it. The procedure can be repeated, and a third trance, still deeper, can result, until sufficient repetitions bring a deep hypnosis.

Concerning unobtrusive posthypnotic suggestions, the author resorts to such measures as saying, "Each time I take hold of your wrist and move your arm gently in this way [demonstrating], it will be a signal to you to do something–perhaps to move your other hand, perhaps to nod your head, perhaps to sleep more soundly, but each time you receive the signal, you will become ready to carry out the task." Repeated several times in the first trance, the subject, in his immediate thinking, applies the suggestion only to that trance session. However, weeks later, in an appropriate setting the repetition of the signal may result in a rapid induction of hypnosis. This method has been used extensively as a timesaving procedure in teaching medical students to become both hypnotists and hypnotic subjects.

As to posthypnotic acts for the subject to execute, some simple casual activity is much better than some attention-compelling overt act. Watching the hypnotist light a cigarette, noting whether the match tossed toward the wastebasket falls in, or observing that

the book on the desk is about two inches away from the edge, are all infinitely better than having the subject clap his hands when the word "pencil" is spoken. The more casually hypnotic work can be done, the easier it is for the subject to adapt to it. Casualness permits ready utilization of the behavioral developments of the total hypnotic situation.

Comments

In presenting this material, the intention has not been to outline specific or exact techniques of procedure for hypnosis; rather, it has been to demonstrate that hypnosis should primarily be the outcome of a situation in which interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships are developed constructively to serve the purpose of both the hypnotist and the subject. This cannot be done by following rigid procedures and fixed methods, nor by a striving to reach a single specific goal. The complexity of human behavior and its underlying motivations makes necessary a cognizance of the multitude of factors existing in any situation arising between two personalities engaged in a joint activity. Whatever the part played by the hypnotist may be, the role of the subject involves the greater amount of active functioning–functioning which derives from the capabilities, learning, and experiential history of the total personality.

Primarily, the hypnotist can only guide, direct, supervise, and provide the opportunity for the subject to do the productive work. To accomplish this the hypnotist must understand the situation and its needs. He must protect the subject fully in that total situation. He must be able to recognize the work accomplished. He must accept and utilize the behavior that develops, and he must be able to create opportunities and situations favorable for adequate functioning of the subject.

In the effort to clarify problems of deep-trance induction, the author has relied upon his experience over a long period of time with a large number of subjects, many of whom were hypnotized hundreds of times. Additionally, that experience was supplemented by the teaching of hypnosis to several hundred students, psychologists, and medical men. Many of them served also as subjects, and all served in various ways to test the validity of the author's experience. Hence, the major part of any credit the author may receive properly belongs to those workers who so willingly contributed to his understandings.

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